CHRISTIANITY AND RECONSTRUCTION

THE LABOUR QUESTION

R BAMPTON, S. J.

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THE LABOUR QUESTION

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CHRISTIANITY AND RECONSTRUCTION

THE LABOUR QUESTION

BY
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The following pages contain the substance of Lectures delivered, some at Westminster Cathedral, others at Farm Street Church. They are published in much the same form as they were delivered, which may explain a mode of expression here and there more suitable to the spoken than to the written word. The Author has derived much valuable help both in the way of information and suggestion from the Report of the Archbishops' Fifth Committee of Inquiry entitled, "Christianity and Industrial Problems," from occasional articles in the Times *on Labour and Social questions, from Coles' "Guild Socialism," and the same author's "Social Theories," and, on the moral questions involved, from Dr Cronin's "Science of Ethics," and the "Moral Philosophy" of Father Joseph Rickaby, S.J., to all of which he wishes to express his indebtedness.*

Christianity & Reconstruction

I.

MAN THE INDIVIDUAL.

"Unless the Lord build the house, they that build it labour in vain."—PSALM cxxvi. 1.

WHEN the great war ended there was one word on everybody's lips. That word was Reconstruction. We were all led to hope that, with the conclusion of hostilities, a serious attempt would be made to reconstruct the world on a new and better basis; a serious attempt not only to repair the ruin caused by the war, and to render war in the future, if not impossible—and I suppose only the most sanguine spirits expected that—to make it at least of rarer occurrence, but an attempt also to repair evils which were independent of the war indeed, but which the war had served to aggravate or to bring into greater prominence. If that hope has not been realised yet, we need not on that account be unduly pessimistic, for reconstruction must be a slow and laborious process.

Something has been done already in that direction, something is still being done, and if more has not been effected perhaps one reason may be this: that the claim of Christianity to a share in that work of reconstruction has not been sufficiently recognised. To give expression in some sort to that claim is the object of the following addresses.

It is not the first time the world has needed reconstruction. A similar need manifested itself at a much earlier period of the world's history, a need like the present, of after-war reconstruction. That was at the conclusion of the wars by which Rome had made herself mistress of the world. That long succession of wars had produced evils in the world very similar to those caused by the great war just ended. Then, as now, there were devastated countries and depleted populations, and oppressed nationalities, and ruined industries, and desolate homes. That age like the present, had its social problems, and its industrial problems, and its food problems, and its agrarian problems, and its housing problems, and its transport problems, and the rest. The only attempt of a practical kind to remedy those evils, was made by the first Roman Emperor, Augustus. He re-organised the whole political and social and fiscal system of Rome; he re-arranged its provincial and municipal government, he encouraged agriculture and trade, he settled the disbanded soldiery upon the land. By these and similar means he re-established some degree of tranquillity and prosperity.

But, shrewd and far-seeing man as he was, he relied in his attempt at reconstruction most of all upon religion. He rebuilt the temples which were falling into ruin, he devoted large sums to their upkeep, he restored the colleges of the Pontiffs, he revived the religious festivals and the like. But he failed, and he failed for this reason, that, although he was right in looking to religion for support, the only religion known to him was false, and was, therefore, itself a hopeless failure. But man's failure was God's opportunity. "Then," said I, "behold I come." Where the pagan religion failed, the Christian religion came to the rescue. The Incarnation took place, God the Son came into the world in human form. He came not only to redeem the world. He came also to reconstruct it, and from His coming we date a new era—the Christian Era, an era which marked the beginning of a newly constructed world. That was the task that Christ Our Lord set Himself, nothing less, but it must be confessed that the methods He adopted seemed at first to be altogether inadequate for the purpose He had in view.

"Jesus," we read, "began to do and to teach." One Man, a Man, as the world reckoned, of obscure origin, without any influence, without any position, gathered round Him in an out-of-the-way corner of the world-wide Roman Empire a handful of disciples, for the most part rude, illiterate men, and instilled into them principles and ideas, few and simple, but of an extremely novel and searching kind. Those prin-

ciples and ideas were in flat contradiction to the accepted maxims and theories of the day. It was clear from the first that they might be far-reaching in their effects. It was certain that if those principles and ideas came to prevail in the world at large, then the old system of paganism was doomed; and that was what actually happened. "Look you how the whole world is going after Him," was the evidence of contemporary witnesses. Christianity came to prevail over the old pagan civilisation of the Roman Empire. That civilisation fell, and with it in its fall went many of the evils which had afflicted mankind. The way was now clear for reconstruction, and upon the ruins of that old pagan civilisation there rose up a new civilisation. Perhaps we do not always realise how much modern civilisation owes to Christianity: it is not too much to say that modern civilisation is the outcome of Christian principles acting as a solvent upon the old-established order of things, and replacing it by a better. Modern civilisation is the result of Christ's principles, although, we must confess, very imperfectly applied. But notwithstanding those imperfections, that is a great result. If you would know how great, contrast the modern world with the old. Modern civilisation, in all that is best in it, stands as a monument to Christ's work of reconstruction, and we are justified in saying that if that work of Christ had been steadily and consistently carried on, there would be no need of reconstruction now. And yet, whatever the reason,

the world now does need reconstructing. How is it to be achieved ?

We have the methods of Christ before us as our guide, methods which did so much to reconstruct the world before, and, if they did not do more, that was not the fault of the methods, it was the fault of the men who failed to apply them. You cannot improve on Christ's methods. Man cannot construct a city, or a dynasty, or a nation or an empire that will endure and survive the ravages of time ; how can man unaided hope to reconstruct a universe ? If the world needs remaking, He who made it first must remake it. If the city needs rebuilding, then " unless the Lord build the city, they that build it labour in vain." And so we do well to study Christ's methods of reconstruction, and, so far as we can, with His help to adopt them now.

The world we have said to which Christ came presented in some respects the same difficulties as our own world at present, as the result of the wars of Rome And no doubt the reformers of that age began their work of reconstruction by seeking to apply direct and immediate remedies to each of the problems which confronted them. And so it is with our statesmen of the present day. Let us not blame them for it. They are right in that endeavour, that is their province, that is their duty ; but to attempt to settle these different problems by treating them piece-meal and applying direct and immediate remedies to each

separately, may be only tinkering, it may be only patching, it may be only scratching the surface, for these problems are symptoms of a greater evil that lies deeper down. To deal with them one by one may be only to treat the symptoms and to neglect the disease. The disease is deep in human nature, in fallen human nature ; then you must deal with human nature in your attempts at reconstruction, and you must deal with human nature not in the abstract, not in the mass, not in the crowd, you must deal with human nature in the individual, you must deal with human nature in the man, you must deal not so much with human institutions as with men ; you must get at the man, the individual man. That was Christ's method, and that method went straight to the root of things. But in Christ's time, the first thing to do was to find the individual man ; indeed, the individual man had first to find himself, for the curse of that old system of the ancient Roman civilisation was the suppression of the individual. In its extreme form that amounted to slavery, the slavery of the Roman Empire ; but even in the case of the free-born Roman citizen there was servitude of another kind, there was complete subordination of the individual to the State. The State existed for itself, the individual existed for the State. The individual was absorbed in the State, was sunk in the State ; the State was everything, the individual, by comparison, was nothing, and for a reason that seemed very obvious to the men of

that time, for the individual citizen perished, but the State endured, the imperial State went on its way majestically, unaffected by the disappearance of the individual citizen.

I need not labour the point. This suppression of the individual under the old Roman civilisation is one of the commonplaces of history. And its immediate result was this : it meant the lowering, not to say the loss of a man's personality. Under this system a man was reduced from the position of a person—that is, a being who exists for himself—to the position of a thing, that is, an object which exists for another : in this case, that other was the State. And further, that led to the lowering, not to say the loss of a man's full manhood. The first thing to be done, then, was to emancipate the individual from this thraldom, to restore to a man his individuality—and that was Christ's first step. Christ addressed Himself to the individual man. It is true He spoke at times to multitudes, but, even when speaking to many, He was speaking to each, addressing to each and every one of His hearers an intimate, personal appeal. "Learn of Me," was the appeal of the individual Christ to the individual man. His was not the appeal of a demagogue to a mob, inciting them to rise up against the system which had oppressed and demoralised them and sweep it away. It was a direct appeal to the individual mind and heart and conscience. And so in all His teaching, He urged the individual man to

look to himself—"What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul?" He urged him to shake himself free from the domination of the old system, to assert his independence, to think and act for himself, to begin his own life anew. In all His teaching, Christ magnified the individual, He came "to seek and to save that which was lost," though it were but one individual, one lost sheep, for the sake of which the ninety-nine were left in the wilderness untended, one lost groat of the woman's hoard, to recover which the house was swept from top to bottom, one soul, one individual soul, compared with the loss of which to gain the whole world profited nothing. Christ not only magnified the individual, He identified Himself with the individual. "As often as ye do it to the least of my brethren, ye do it to me." And He not only identified Himself with the individual, He died for the individual, and every one of us can say with St Paul—"He loved me and delivered Himself for me."

If, then, under the old system the individual was nothing, under Christ's system the individual was everything, and thus it was that Christ restored to a man, with his individuality, his personality, his manhood. He restored to him the sense of his rights as a man, of his proper independence as a man, of his worth as a man. And not only did Christ thus restore man to the full dignity of human nature and to the full privileges of human life, but He exalted that nature, He

extended that life, He bestowed upon man a new life, a life so strictly new that it required a new birth to inaugurate it. "You must be born again," Christ said, and that new birth which initiated this new life meant to be "born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." It, therefore, established a new and a higher relationship between God and man: "To as many as received Him, to them He gave the power to be sons of God." This new birth then made men sons of God, and if sons, then, in some sense, sharers in God's nature. We need not be afraid to say so, St Peter has said it. We may be "partakers in the divine nature," he tell us, and if sons of God and partakers in the divine nature, then heirs of God —that St Paul has told us—"heirs of God, indeed, in very truth, and joint heirs with Christ."

Such then was man, the individual man as Christ re-made him, a man in the full sense, a human personality, one in whom the image and likeness of God, which had been so sadly defaced in the old days of the pagan civilisation, was once more restored; and not only so, but one adopted by God as son, acknowledged by the God-Man as brother, exalted to a divine nature, endowed with a divine inheritance. "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" the Psalmist had asked, and in prophetic vision he returned the answer to his own question, the answer that was to come with the coming of Christ; "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, thou hast crowned

him with glory and honour." But you cannot enslave a being like this; a being like this is not meant to be the serf of any state or of any system, political, commercial, economic, social, and the rest. You cannot stamp out an individuality like this, you cannot merge and sink that individuality in the crowd. That is what the old pagan civilisation tried to do, and from that Christ has delivered us.

Do men know what they owe to Christ? Do we know? "Ecce homo"—Behold the Man, the God-Man Who took flesh for us, who loved us, saved us, redeemed us, and bled for us, died for us, that He might give us back our manhood, exalted and ennobled a hundredfold, that He might enable each of us to be a man in the true sense, and to "give the world assurance of a man." This was the enfranchisement of the individual man by Christ, and this was Christ's first step in the reconstruction of the world.

For, when we speak of reconstruction, it is not a question so much of reconstruction of the material world; it is a question of moral reconstruction, it is a question of the reconstruction of the world of human beings, of human society. Now the individual man is the first and simplest element of human society, he is the very foundation of the social edifice. The world to which Christ came showed an imposing, a pretentious edifice of civilisation, but one which we have seen suppressed the individual, and the individual is the foundation of the social edifice. Here

was a building without a foundation. The first step of Christ, then, was to restore that foundation, by restoring to men their individuality. And now once more it is a question of reconstructing the world. What is wrong with it ? May it not be the same defect ? May it not be that, in our present system, the individual man has not the position which is his by right and by nature, and which Christ Our Lord gave back to him ? That is a question we must reserve for further consideration. For the present it is enough to say that, if this be the defect in our modern civilisation which calls for its reconstruction, then we must begin there, we must begin where Christ began, by reconstructing the individual man, for unless we do the work after Christ's example, and with Christ's blessing, "unless the Lord build the house, they that build it will labour in vain."

II.

MAN, THE SOCIAL BEING.

"The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve."—St Matthew xx. 28.

We have considered how Our Lord began His great work of reconstruction. He began by giving man his rightful position in the world. The radical defect of the old-world system had been the suppression of the individual man, a suppression which amounted to degradation. That was the cause of many of the evils which attended that system. Our Lord began by putting that right. He restored to man his individuality, and with it his sense of personality, his consciousness of his manhood. The individual man, we have said, is the first and simplest element of human society, the foundation of the social edifice. The edifice needed reconstructing. Then Christ began at the right end. He began by building from the very foundation. In any scheme of reconstruction at the present day we, if necessary, must do the same.

We have now to consider another principle which entered into Christ's plan of reconstruction—a principle equally fundamental. We spoke of the individual man just now as the foundation of the social

structure. For man is by nature not only individualistic ; he is by nature also social. That could be proved, if necessary, from certain attributes of human nature, from certain human characteristics and qualities and aptitudes and instincts of a distinctly social kind. It could be proved from the invariable practice of men of all ages and races forming themselves into communities to live the social life in common. To regard a man as an individual only would be a one-sided view of his character ; he is also a social being. If a man, then, has his own rights as an individual, he must remember that others have their rights too. If he demands respect and recognition for his own rights, he must recognise and respect the rights of others. Recognition of the rights of others constitutes what we call duty. If a man has rights, then, he has duties also. Rights, on the one hand, imply duties on the other. Rights and duties are correlative terms. For a man to assert his rights and neglect his duties is individualism carried to extremes, it is a selfish individualism.

While, then, Our Lord championed a man's rights as an individual, He also emphasised his duties as a social being. And He declared in what those duties consist. Practical recognition of the rights of others is duty. God has his rights in respect of a man. Let a man acknowledge those rights of God in practice, and he fulfils his duty to God. And Our Lord has told us in what that duty of man to God consists : " Thou

shalt love the Lord thy God." Again, a man's fellow-men have rights in respect of him. Let a man acknowledge in practice those rights too, and he discharges his duty to his fellow-men. And Our Lord has told us wherein that duty consists: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "Thou shalt love the Lord Thy God: thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "On these two commandments," Our Lord said, "dependeth the whole law." And they are both commandments of love. Therefore, Christ's apostle declared: "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Love is the fulfilling of a man's duty both to God and man; it is the fulfilling of a man's nature; it is what makes a man a full, a whole man. "Fear God and keep His commandments," the wise man said, "for that is 'omnis homo' the whole man." Fear God and keep His two commandments of love. That is the whole man. Individualism in a man, which may easily become love of self, without the performance of the social duty of love of others, makes him only half a man.

Man, then, besides being an individual, is also a social being, and Christ comprises His social duties in one word—Love.

Now, love is proved by service. Love of God is proved by service of God. And love of man is proved by service of man. Christ had next to enforce this lesson, and, like all His lessons, He enforced it by example as well as by precept. "Jesus began to do and to teach."

His own life on earth was a life of service of God and of man. First, of God; His prophet had foretold it: "In the head of the book it is written of me that I should do Thy will: O my God, I have willed it and Thy law in the midst of My Heart." And Christ said of Himself: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me." Christ's life, then, was a life of service of God. And, next, it was a life of service of man. He came on earth, "taking the form of a servant," His apostle tells us. And He said of Himself: "I am among you as one that serveth." And again: "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve."

Christ's life is the model life—the pattern of what our lives should be. Then, ours should be lives of service, too, after His example. And He has told us that in so many words. For it was after He had performed a peculiarly menial act of service to His Apostles that He said: "I have given you an example that, as I have done to you, so should you do also." He enjoined the same duty of service to our fellow-men, when He said: "Whatsoever you would that others should do to you, do ye also unto them." You would that others should respect your rights, as an individual, as a man; respect theirs. You would that others should perform their duties to you; perform yours to them. You would that others should render service to you when you need it; see that you render due service to them. Christ's life is the ideal life; the ideal life is the life of service.

Here, again, we have one of these novel doctrines of Christ, which must have come as a shock to the world of His time. In the eyes of the old Roman world, service was dishonouring, degrading. Christ taught that service was not servitude. Under Christ's system, service was a duty—a universal, an honourable duty, whether it were service of God or man. If of God, service was a royal, a kingly act: "To serve God is to reign." If of man, it was not the act of an inferior; it was rather the act of an equal, who, if he rendered service to others, had a right to expect it in return; it was a friendly, a brotherly act, performed in the spirit of brotherhood by one who claimed to be a member of a human family. That position Christ vindicated for each man. He vindicated it in one word, "Our Father." God is the common Father of all; then men are brethren. His apostle asserted it still more explicitly, when he said, "Ye are one body, members of that one body, needing mutual service. The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor the head to the foot, I have no need of thee. So ye are the body of Christ and 'membra de membro,' members one of another." Love, we have said, is proved by service. The Commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour," is, then, reducible to this: "Thou shalt serve thy neighbour in his need"; love is reducible to social service.

Here, then, are two chief planks in our Lord's platform: the principle of individualism on the one

hand, the principle of social service on the other, both enforced by Christ's example and teaching, both fundamental to Christ's aim of reconstruction, both equally necessary in our work of reconstruction to-day. Each the corrective, the complement of the other. For individualism alone, without social service, means pure egoism. Social service alone, without a proper assertion of individual rights, means, at worst, servility—at best, an exaggerated altruism. Both the individual element and the social element are needed to constitute the whole man.

We said that the individual man was the foundation of the social system. But not the individual man who is the arrogant and aggressive asserter of his own rights to the exclusion of the rights of others, not the selfish stickler for his own rights, but the individual man who, while he is rightly jealous of his own rights is mindful of the rights of others—who recognises that rights imply duties, and who is ready upon occasion to forgo his own rights in the discharge of his duty of social service. The motto of the former is, "I have not come to serve, but to be served"; the motto of the latter is the same as his Master's: "I have not come to be served, but to serve."

In the work of reconstruction, we have said, we must begin with man himself; we must remind him that, if he is an individual, he is also a social being. That Christianity never allows him to forget.

III.

MAN'S RIGHTS AS AN INDIVIDUAL.

"Honour all men."—1 St Peter ii. 17.

So far we have considered man under a two-fold aspect—as an individual and as a social being; as an individual with individual rights, and as a social being, a member of society, with social duties. Both taken together, the consciousness of rights and the acknowledgment of duties make the man. And I am glad to see that that principle has received public recognition recently. What is called a "Liberty League" has been formed to combat Bolshevism. In its initial programme it is declared that "social duty is inseparable from individual rights." That is the principle we contended for in our last address. It is a Christian principle, as we then showed—a principle following direct from the teaching of Christ. That it should be put in the forefront of its programme by one of the newest political and social organisations is a healthy sign. It is a sign that men are coming round to the conviction that in their attempts at reconstruction they must fall back on Christian principles—which is precisely what it is the object of these addresses to prove.

Man's complete status, then, is that of an individual and of a social being. He had lost it under the old Roman civilisation. Christ reinstated him. That was Christ's preliminary step in His work of reconstruction. What if it should be ours, in our task of reconstruction to-day? Let us inquire.

First, then, man is an individual. What is his rightful position as an individual? To put that position at its lowest, man is by nature a living being, a living human being, and therefore a rational creature, a free agent. He is this by nature. By God's grace he may be far more than this: by God's grace he may be a Son of God, an heir of heaven. This is a position of dignity, of honour. "Honour all men," the Apostle says; and herein lies a man's double title to honour. Is that honourable position of his recognised, as a rule, in the world to-day? That can be easily determined. That position carries with it certain rights. A man's position is honoured if his rights are respected. Are those rights for the most part respected? Before answering, let us understand clearly what those rights are.

First, man is a living being. Then he has the right to live; he has the right to the means necessary for the support of life—to food, clothing, shelter, and to a decent standard of each. But, "Not by bread alone doth man live." What have just been mentioned are necessities of his animal life. But man is not only animal, he is spirit, too. "God breathed into his

nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul" —a living spirit, and the spirit in him is intellect and will. Then he has the right to live the life of the spirit, to the development of his spiritual faculties, to the training of mind and character by education suited to his needs and capacity. For he is not only a living being, like the beasts that perish; he is a living human being, a rational creature. And again, we have said, man is a free agent. It is his free will that makes him so. Then he has the right to the exercise of his free will, his liberty. His proper independence must be respected, he must be treated as a free man.

But man is not only an individual, with individual rights. He is also a social being, with social duties, as has been shown. Yes, but with social rights, too. And first among his social rights come his domestic rights, because first among all human societies comes the family. Man is a domestic being. Then he has the right to the life of the family and the home. But he is a member of a larger family still. He is a member of the universal family, the great brotherhood of mankind. Then he has the right to be treated as a man and a brother.

All these are rights that follow from his natural life. But over and above this, if he is availing himself of the privileges offered by God, man is endowed with a supernatural life, a supernatural destiny. Certainly every Christian man is so endowed. Then the Christian

man has the right to the cultivation of his supernatural life, he has the right to work out his supernatural destiny; and he has the right to the opportunity, to the leisure required to do so. This present life is given him as a preparation for the life to come. Then he has the right to facilities for such preparation.

Here, then, we have some strict and inalienable rights of the man, regarded individually and socially, rights which follow at once from the position given to him by God—God-given rights following from a God-given position. "Honour all men," honour them for their position, then honour the rights which that position confers. Are those rights honoured under present conditions? And, first, are they honoured, let us ask, in the industrial world? Let us take that as an example, because, in this question of reconstruction which confronts us, the chief problem of all is the problem of industrial reconstruction—the labour problem. I believe it is true to say that it is labour unrest, more than any other single cause that can be named, that has had the effect of forcing this whole question of reconstruction upon public attention.

Are the rights, then, just enumerated, respected always and for the most part in the world of industry? And, first, the right to live? That supposes enough to live on. Have many, have vast numbers of the toilers in the industrial world got that? The facts are notorious. The briefest reference to statistics will suffice to remind you of them. An official inquiry

set on foot by the Government a few years ago revealed the fact that in eight of the great staple industries of this country, eight of the great industries on which the prosperity of the country depends, the average weekly earnings of a male worker ranged from 25s. to 33s. a week. In another enquiry of still more recent date, which was made among the population of four of our large representative industrial centres, it was discovered that one-third of the adult workers in those four towns were earning less than 24s. a week. A man has a right to live. Can this be called a living wage? Can it be called fair remuneration for a man's labour, especially when that labour is prolonged, as recent returns show, to 14, 15, sometimes even 16 hours a day? "The labourer is worthy of his hire." For such labour as this, is a man worthier of no better hire?

I know the difficulties of deciding what constitutes a living wage, difficulties arising from variation in the cost and standard of living, from the rise and fall of prices, from fluctuations of the labour market, from the limit of the wages which a trade or firm at any given time can afford to pay, without itself becoming insolvent—and the like. But there is a principle available which does help to determine what is a living wage by at least determining what is not. It is a principle which is incontrovertible, one derived from the nature of labour itself. For why must men labour at all? What is the end and object of labour?

The answer is given by God himself: "In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread." To earn his daily bread, to live and procure the means of living, it is that which imposes on man the necessity of labour, that is its divinely-instituted end and object. Now, if a man's labour is of itself adequate to attain that end, and his wages are not, then there is utter disproportion between work and wages, a disproportion which amounts to substantial injustice. Under such conditions a man is not receiving the wage he has earned—he is not receiving a fair wage. The only fair wage is a wage that enables him to live, supposing him to have done the work to deserve it; for to enable him to live is precisely what labour is instituted for A well-known expert, Mr Seebohm Rowntree, has calculated that in normal times in this country a man requires, if he is to provide the bare necessaries of life for himself and a moderate family, without any margin for superfluities, at least twenty-six shillings a week. That, he calculates, is the irreducible minimum of a bare living wage. And yet we have just said that one-third of the adult workers in four of our large centres of industry were, in normal times, earning less than twenty-four shillings a week. It may be difficult to say exactly what is a living wage. It is easier to say what is not. Less than twenty-four shillings a week —three shillings a day—is not a living wage. It is starvation wages. A man works to live. He does not work to starve. It follows from the very nature

of industry, just explained, that the first charge on every industry should be a living wage for the workers, remembering that among the workers must be counted employers as well as employees. And if a trade or firm cannot afford to pay that, it becomes a question whether it has the right to exist or to employ labour. Though, of course, it may be that, in abnormal times like the present, the firm cannot afford more adequate remuneration, and it may be better for the workman to earn something to keep him out of unemployment than to earn nothing at all.

From what has been said, we can judge how far a man's first right—the right to live—has been respected in the industrial world in our own times.

And yet, again, a man has the right, we have said, to the life of the family and the home. What possibility of rearing and maintaining a family do the wages just quoted afford? And as for the home, the census of 1911 shows that nine per cent. of the population of England and Wales, seventeen per cent of the population of Greater London, were living more than two in a room, and we may be sure that, with the scarcity of house accommodation, due to the total cessation of building during the four years of war, that state of things has not improved since. To say nothing of common decency, of the requirements of sanitation and of health, what opportunity is given to a man for the enjoyment of the ordinary comforts of home and of social life in such surroundings, when

the only home he knows is a hovel, and the only social life open to him is the social life of the slum ?

And a man has the right to the life of the spirit. To a man living his physical life under such conditions as these, to talk of the life of the spirit is sheer mockery. All his energies are absorbed, are exhausted in the struggle to exist, in the struggle to keep alive, and the spirit in him—the spirit even of the bravest—is crushed by the work, the overwork of each day as it comes, and the anxiety for the morrow. I remember reading some years ago a narrative in one of our periodical papers which described the life of a seamstress condemned to work all day long and far into the night at sweated labour, with scarcely time to snatch a meal or a brief rest, and all to earn a mere pittance. Her life was reduced to the mechanical drudgery of plying the needle or working the sewing-machine ; all the finer instincts of nature blunted, dulled, all its higher aspirations quenched, all the joy of life banished. And yet she was a woman, with a woman's soul, a woman's spirit, once. That narrative was entitled, "The Woman with the Dead Soul."

And yet, again, man has a right to the life of freedom. Slavery, indeed, is no more ; but can the life of a man under the conditions just described be considered any better, in effect, than that of a slave, whatever be the name ? And that is due not merely to the conditions of hours and wages, but to the whole spirit which pervades the industrial market, for is it

not true that the spirit which prevails there too often regards the man merely for his value, for his utility, as a mere instrument of production, as an economic unit? You may not call him a slave, but call him what the industrial world calls him—"a hand." We must not press the force of a phrase like that too far, that would be unfair, but still, the fact that such a phrase is in common use is, in itself, significant. At least it implies this, that in the worker, as a rule, there is no need for mental effort, there is no call for that in his work; all that is asked of him is just manual labour, manual dexterity. Call him a "hand." He is not a slave, but is he anything better than a mere hewer of wood and drawer of water?

We have considered some of the rights of the individual man—the right to life, physical and spiritual; the right to family life, the right to the life of freedom. Are these rights honoured? In a vast number of cases they are honoured, it is to be feared, more in the breach than in the observance. A man's rights follow from his position. Then we can judge from this whether many a man has his rightful position in the world at present. That rightful position, we have said, is this: It is a position of one who is a living being, a rational creature, a free agent, a son of God, an heir of heaven. Honour all men Honour them for that; but when the human being, the free man, the son of God, and heir of eternity, is reduced to a position of a mere cog in the wheels of the industrial

machine, then that precept of the Apostle, "Honour all men," sounds like grim irony.

I am not enquiring at present into the cause of this state of things; I am not presuming to fix responsibility or to apportion blame. I am only trying to state facts, and these facts, as stated, cannot, I think, be gainsaid. Now, we said that the radical defect in the old-world system which Christ came to reconstruct was the inferior position given in it to the individual man. Christ set that right: Christ put man in his rightful position. Has man fallen from it since? If so, it is the task of Christianity to-day to reinstate him in it; it is there that reconstruction must begin—how, we must reserve for further consideration.

Note.—The statistics here given are taken from "Christianity and Trade Problems," the report of the Archbishops' Committee of Inquiry, published in 1918. No doubt, under the pressure of conditions created by the war, the scale of wages has risen considerably all round. But the above statistics stand on record as evidence of what were considered fair wages in normal times. On the present condition of the housing problem, the late Minister of Health, Dr Addison, says ("The Betrayal of the Slums," 1922): "In England and Wales alone there are nearly a million dwelling places, so-called homes, which consist of not more than two rooms" (p. 19). "According to the recent report of the Royal Commission, there were 399,876 people in Scotland living in houses of one room only, and 1,881,529 others living in houses of not more than two rooms" (*ibid.* p. 60).

IV.

MAN'S DUTIES AS A SOCIAL BEING.

1. The Christian Conception of Labour.

"Thou shalt eat of the labour of thy hands. Blessed art thou, and it shall be well with thee."—Psalm cxxvii. 2.

In our last address we were considering how far many a man's rights as an individual are regarded in the existing state of things, with particular reference to the lower ranks of the world of labour; and how far, consequently, reconstruction may be needed there. And, having dealt with a man's rights, we go on, next to deal with a man's social duties, and we have to enquire how far men's social duties are discharged in the present state of things in the industrial world, and how far reconstruction may be needed in that respect also.

Our Lord, we have said, summed up man's social duties in one word—love. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour." And Our Lord has further taught us, we have said, both by precept and example, that the love He meant was a love proved by social service; and, therefore, our enquiry is reducible to this: How far

is the Christian principle of social service observed in the industrial world at the present day? But first we have to consider what constitutes the Christian ideal of labour, considered as social service.

We have been forced to admit that the conditions which prevail to a great extent—in the lower ranks, at least, of the industrial world—are degrading. They are dishonouring to a man; they are unworthy of a man's proper position—that position which belongs to man by right, and which was vindicated for him by Christ. To what degrading influences are those conditions due? Not to labour itself. There is nothing dishonouring, nothing degrading in labour, considered in itself. Christ has taught us that, as always, in the most effective way—by His own example. "Christ began to do and to teach." Christ was a labouring Man: Christ was "poor and in labours from His youth." There can be nothing dishonouring, nothing degrading in an occupation which Christ Himself has shared and sanctified. And, so far from degrading a man from his proper position, labour belongs to that position, for it is a man's appointed lot. "Man goeth forth to his toil and his labour until the evening." And, as labour is man's lot, so it is also his duty, and a duty to be performed for a very definite reason, already considered. "In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread." Labour is a duty imposed on man that he may earn the bread by which he lives. No man may eat the bread of idleness. "If a man

will not work, neither shall he eat," is the Apostle's emphatic pronouncement. There is no room for drones in the busy human hive.

A man has to labour, then, that he may live and procure the necessaries of life, and in such measure as may enable him to maintain a decent standard of living. If labour does not do that for a man, then labour fails of its purpose. Moreover, if labour not only does not secure for a man a decent standard of living, but makes it difficult for a man to live at all, then labour defeats its own object, which is the support of life.

But labour is not meant to support the life of the individual alone ; we must take a wider view than that of the functions of labour. Labour is meant to support the life of all. A man labours not only that he may live ; he labours that others also may live, for labour is, by its very nature, a reciprocal undertaking. If labour is to exist at all there must be reciprocity in labour, there must be division of labour, give and take, each man giving of his own for his own benefit and for the benefit of all : one man giving of his means, of his capital, another man giving of his actual toil. And in the toil itself there must be equitable division ; one man giving of the toil of his mind, of his brain, another man giving of the toil of his thews and sinews ; one man giving of his powers in inventing, in designing, in planning, in organising, in superintending, another man giving of his manual skill, his industry, his physical

strength in execution. For, as has been already said, we are all "members one of another." No member can say to another, "I have no need of thee." Each then must make his contribution to the common cause of labour, and, thus considered, labour is not only a private undertaking—it is a public undertaking: it is not only a personal duty, it is a social duty, one of those social duties imposed upon man as a social being, and a social duty, therefore, to be undertaken and carried out for social purposes, for the common life and welfare of all.

But as that is the end and object of labour, let us see to it that labour is so organised as to attain the welfare of all. To that end, let labour, so organised, go forward and prosper. To that end—the well-being of all—let the earth be tilled and made to yield of its produce, of the fruits of its surface, or of the treasures that lie hidden within its depths. To that end let man establish his mastery over sea and air. To that end, let science rob nature of its secrets and apply them ever more and more to fresh processes of manufacture and of efficiency; to that end, let the inventive genius of man be employed in discovering improved methods of production and distribution. And the end is this: that there may be sufficiency at least for all men, and, the better to secure sufficiency for all, for some, in proper measure and proportion, a due degree of wealth and prosperity, so that nature may give of her plenty to all men, that God's gifts may be more

widely distributed, and that there may be a freer, fuller, happier, life for all.

"Men my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new
That which they have done but earnest, of the things that they shall do."

Labour then is not a private undertaking, to be engaged in for the aggrandisement of the few, it is a public, a common fellowship, to be pursued in the spirit of co-operation for public service, in the spirit of healthy rivalry by all means, but not in the spirit of selfish competition. And so we come back to that principle of social service which we have seen was laid down by Christ, and which has been already explained. Of that social service, labour is an important branch.

But we should not be doing justice to the Christian conception of labour if we stopped here. Besides the life and the labour of the present, Christ bids us look forward to another life and another labour, to which the life and the labour of the present are subordinated. For there is another life. "I have come," Christ said, "that they may have life and may have it more abundantly." There is a more abundant life, a life so far superior to this present life that, in order to gain that other life, to lose this would be life well lost. "He that would save his life must lose it." And there is another labour, compared with which this present labour hardly deserves to be considered at all, and Christ has told us that, too: "Labour not

for the meat that perisheth, but labour for that which endureth unto life everlasting." That is the other life, "life everlasting," the labour meant to secure it is enjoined in the words, "work out your salvation," and, in the long run, that is the only labour that counts, the only labour that matters. If then to that higher life and labour, the life and labour of the present are subordinated by God, they must be ordered by us in due subordination one to the other. Time and leisure and opportunity, as has been already said, must be found in the life and labour of the present to perform that higher labour and to secure the life to come.

Such is the Christian conception of labour. It is a divinely ordained means for the support of life not only of the individual but of all. It is a duty, both personal and social; it is a common fellowship of mankind. That is Christ's gospel of work. Is there anything degrading in labour so conceived? Degrading! It is ennobling. It not only adds dignity to a man, it may even add a blessing, for labour, originally part of the primeval curse—"Cursed is the earth in thy labour"—has been transformed into a blessing: "Thou shalt eat of the labour of thy hands: Blessed art thou and it shall be well with thee."

But is not this to paint too fanciful, too purely idealistic, a picture of labour, a picture perhaps to be realised in the Millennium, but hardly likely to be realised under the economic pressure of the present workaday world? A Christian ideal it is, but is it

therefore impracticable? Christ was no theorist, He was no mere idealist, and this is what Labour should be if penetrated by the spirit of Christ and regulated by the law of Christ. And surely, if life is God's precious gift to us all, a life which God the Son has shared with us, and if labour be the divinely-appointed means for the support of that life, a labour He has also shared, then this life and this labour are largely God's affair, and should be regulated not by economic laws alone independent of the law of God. A truth to be borne in mind by both masters and men. Let the great controllers and employers of industry perform their allotted functions and the workers theirs. Let the one apply sound principles to the practical organisation of industries and the others carry them out, but in those principles and in their application let God at least have some say. A Christian ideal it is, but in these days, when the grand ideals of humanity are beginning to take practical shape for the betterment of the world, is it too much to hope that this Christian ideal may not be lost sight of in the world of industry? We asked at the beginning of this address what degrading influence it was that was at work in the present conditions of labour. Here is one. One chief degrading influence of labour as at present organised is this: it has departed from the Christian ideal of labour, and for that has substituted another. What that other ideal is we must leave for consideration in our next address.

V.

MAN'S DUTIES AS A SOCIAL BEING.

2. The Modern Conception of Labour.

"You cannot serve God and Mammon."—St. Matt. vi. 24.

Having put and answered the question, How far are man's individual rights respected in the industrial world to-day? we proceeded next to inquire, How far are his social duties observed? and, in particular, How far is the Christian conception of labour, regarded as social duty, recognised in practice? Before answering that question, it was necessary to form a clear idea as to what the Christian conception of labour is. We have seen that the Christian conception of labour, in relation to life, is this: Labour is the divinely-appointed means of supporting life, and of supporting not the individual life alone, but the common life of the community as a whole; labour, therefore, is to be regarded not so much as matter of private enterprise as of private and public duty; and considered as public duty it is to be regarded as a common fellowship of co-operation for public service. This, it was said, was the Christian conception of labour in relation to the present life; but the life and labour of the

present, it was also said, had a direct relation to the life to come, and to the labour which it entails, a relation of a secondary and subordinate kind. Then the present life of labour should be ordered in due subordination to that higher life and labour. Such, then, is the Christian conception of labour in relation to life, both present and future.

It seems almost idle to inquire how far that conception of labour is realised in the industrial world of to-day. Labour, we have said, is the means of life, it is not the end of life : to how many men to-day it is ! Man does not live to labour, we have said, he labours to live. How many men do live to labour—some perhaps by choice, by preference, to whom labour, whether you call it business or commerce or trade, has become the one absorbing preoccupation, the be-all and end-all of life, many more by hard necessity. But whether a man of set choice and purpose devotes practically all his life and all his energies to business transactions and is immersed in them, or is driven by necessity to labour the livelong day, with just sufficient respite from labour to enable him to renew his energies and to begin to labour again, of such men it is truer to say that they live to labour than that they labour to live. With them labour, which should be the means of life, has become the end.

Again, it was said that labour is not meant to be the means of supporting the individual life alone, it is meant to support the common life of all : it is a common

fellowship, and, therefore, to be conducted in the spirit of fellowship. To judge from actual conditions, you would say it is just the opposite. Judging by actual conditions, you would say that the normal state of labour is a state of strife between conflicting interests, that the spirit which prevails in labour is a spirit of mutual distrust and antagonism between the different sections composing the industrial world, that mutual suspicion and antagonism giving rise to perpetual industrial disputes, in which the lock-out on the one hand, and the strike or the threat of "direct action" on the other, are the weapons usually employed, with the result that the common life of all, the life of the community, is imperilled, often indefinitely held up, sometimes on the verge of being brought to a standstill, and that by the operation of that very labour which ought to be its support.

And yet once more, it was said that the life and labour of the present should be ordered in subordination to the life to come, and the labour required to attain that. To that life and labour the present should yield precedence, that life and labour should come first. Come first! Does it come anywhere? How much room can be found in many departments of industrial life as at present organised for the life, whether natural or supernatural, of the spirit? The life of the spirit is almost completely elbowed out in the rush of modern industrial life; and in the "labour for the meat that perisheth," and in the maintenance of the

perishable life, there is scant time or opportunity for that other labour of which Our Lord spoke, the "labour for that which endureth unto life everlasting."

Such is the modern conception of labour, a very different conception of labour from the Christian conception of labour as we considered it in our last address. That was industry as it should be ; this is industrialism as it is. To what are we to attribute the difference between the two ? Many people will say it is due to causes which are inevitable, to causes over which we have little or no control. It is due, they will say, to the magnitude and complexity of modern industry, to the enormous development of commerce and trade, to the steady force of economic pressure, to inexorable laws of supply and demand, and the like. All this no doubt is partly true, but it is not the whole truth.

We must seek the real cause of this difference elsewhere, and the real, the inner cause lies, it is to be feared, in the almost universal acceptance of a principle which, though perhaps not formulated in set terms, is tacitly assumed and generally acted upon, and that principle is this : that the end and object of human existence is the acquisition of material wealth. Labour is the means of acquiring that material wealth ; then labour is the main pursuit of life ; wealth is the primary end of life, labour is life's subsidiary end. It is this principle which has completely subverted and supplanted the Christian conception of labour, for it is

a principle which is in direct conflict with the teaching of Christ.

Christ's teaching with regard to wealth is well known, it is hardly necessary to enlarge upon it. Christ does not condemn wealth offhand. He does not condemn wealth honestly and legitimately acquired. Christ does warn us against undue preoccupation with regard to material wealth, "Be not solicitous," Christ says. Christ does point out the dangers which are attendant upon wealth; "Woe to you rich"; "easier for the camel to pass through the needle's eye," and the rest. Christ does tell us that wealth may be a snare—the parable of Dives and Lazarus teaches that. Christ does teach us that wealth is a responsibility, that wealth is a stewardship, of which He will exact a strict account—the parable of the talents teaches that—and Christ makes no secret at all of His own preference for poverty. He chose poverty Himself—"He was poor and in labours from His youth"—He blessed it in others—"Blessed are the poor!"—and for the man who would aspire to the highest, to the perfect life, Christ makes the renunciation of wealth an indispensable condition—"If you will be perfect, go, sell all you have, and you shall have treasure in Heaven and come, follow Me." In view of this teaching of Christ with regard to wealth, to make the acquisition of wealth the end and object of human existence is not merely un-Christian, it is anti-Christian. It is not merely to set up an un-

Christian ideal, it is to set up a heathen ideal, and Christ says so in so many words. "After all these things," Christ says, "do the heathen seek." But to His disciples He says, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice." "Lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven," expresses the Christian end of life. Lay up to yourselves treasures on earth, expresses the end of human existence which the modern industrial world proposes to itself.

The moralists tell us that a human act derives its moral character chiefly from the end proposed; chiefly, not entirely, for other things have to be considered in estimating the moral character of an act, *e.g.*, the matter concerned, the attendant circumstances, the means employed and the like. But still, it is true to say that it is the end which chiefly determines the character of the act, it is the end which chiefly makes the act good, bad or indifferent: and what is true of a single act is true also of that series of acts which constitute life. It is the end proposed to life then that gives life its character, its complexion, that makes life what it is. Let that end of life be noble, and the life is noble; and the Christian end of life is the seeking of the Kingdom of God and His justice. The Christian end of life is, therefore, the service of God and the service of man in obedience to God's law. Let that end be steadily and consistently pursued, and the Christian life, and the labour of the Christian life are ennobled by that end. But substitute for that end

of life another, for the service of God substitute the pursuit of wealth, and the whole life is dragged down to the level of that end, and then what a poor, mean, sordid thing God's noble gift of life can become ! To the individual who makes that the end of his life, to the man who lays up treasure on earth, Christ's words apply : "Where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also." His treasure is of the earth, his heart is of the earth, earthy. His is the cold, callous, hard, selfish, grasping heart of the man whose god is money, whose religion is the worship of the golden calf. And not for the individual only, but for the community also which sets that end of life before it, the whole conception of life is lowered, the wells of life are defiled, the spiritual side of life disappears, it is swamped, swallowed up in the material.

And when the whole scheme of life is thus degraded, it is not surprising that labour, the means of supporting life, and the labourer are degraded too. Labour, instead of a dignity, becomes a drudgery ; the employer of labour is no longer a member of a great confederation, of a fellowship of labour, he becomes an adventurer out for private gain ; the employee is too often reduced from the position of a human being to that of a machine, an economic asset, not rated as a man but exploited as an instrument of production, estimated not at his human value but at his commercial value, valued not for what he is in himself but for his money's worth. This is what he is in the eyes of his employer

—and in his own eyes, his powers, his skill, his strength valued by himself for what they can fetch at so much an hour! To such a depth the labourer may sink in his own estimation.

We have contrasted two conceptions of labour—the Christian and the modern. We have sought the cause of the difference between them, the source of the degrading influence at work in the field of labour. And we have found it in the substitution of a false end of life for its true end, the substitution of the service of Mammon for the service of God. These two ends are hopelessly irreconcilable. Our Lord has told us so: "You cannot serve God and Mammon." Wherein lies the remedy for this state of things? That has to be considered next.

VI.

THE CHRISTIAN BASIS OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND SOCIAL DUTIES.

"By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love for one another."—St. John, xiii. 35.

We have been contrasting two conceptions of labour in relation to life—that of Christianity and that of modern industrialism. We said that the root cause of the difference between them was to be found in the rival ends of life and labour which they proposed: the end proposed by Christianity, the service of God and man, the end proposed by modern industrialism, the service of Mammon. If it be asked, Where are we to seek a remedy for the evils of modern industrialism, the answer is obvious. Restore, if you can, the Christian ideal of life and labour: bring back the Christian spirit. To what agency are we to look for this? There is only one agency that can infuse the Christian spirit: that agency is Christianity. That statement we have now to make good.

Most writers and thinkers on this subject are agreed that a new spirit in the world of labour is what is required for its regeneration; and when you ask them how they propose to produce this spirit, they will tell

you, for the most part, that they look to the harmonizing of relations between employers and employees by such means as industrial boards, industrial councils, industrial associations, and the like, after the pattern of Whitley Councils; to come to particulars, such councils as the National Council which has already succeeded in settling disputes between members of the Civil Service, or, on a larger scale, the International Labour Conference, which it is proposed to make a permanent institution. No doubt such conferences can do good and valuable work. But can they create the spirit desired? They can pass resolutions, they can frame agreements, but it depends on the spirit of the parties to those agreements, whether they will be observed or not. Some recent incidents tend to show that. These bodies may be even empowered—as it is said the International Labour Conference is to be empowered to enact laws in the industrial world, but it all depends on the spirit of the parties concerned whether or not those laws will be obeyed. Resolutions and agreements and laws and regulations cannot create a spirit. You cannot manufacture a spirit by artificial means, you cannot enforce a spirit by legislation. A spirit must be a spontaneous thing. A spirit is a very real thing, a real living, driving force; but a spirit is a subtle thing, an elusive thing, an intangible thing. A spirit is the product of many influences combined, of many causes: and one main cause which helps to create a spirit is what we were speaking of in our last

address—the end and object which a man or a body of men propose to themselves. It is the end or object, we said, that most of all determines the character of a human act; and the end and object proposed has much to do with determining the spirit in which that human act is performed. You can hardly pursue a noble end in an ignoble spirit, and you can hardly pursue an ignoble end in a spirit that is noble.

Now, the end and object of the modern industrial world is—to put it plainly—money-making, pure and simple. If it is the end which chiefly determines the spirit, what sort of spirit do you expect to find in a world whose end is that? The answer must be, the very spirit prevailing in the industrial world at present—the spirit which we all deplore and are most anxious to change. How is it to be changed? The end determines the spirit; if you would change the spirit, change the end. For that sordid end which the industrial world at present proposes to itself, substitute, if you can, a better, a worthier end—and that is Christ's plan.

We have just said that a spirit is difficult to create. But Christ claims to be able to create it. That Christ expected His teaching to infuse a new spirit into mankind is unquestionable. "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life," He said. Christ's teaching was the "Word of God, living and effectual and piercing even to the division of the soul and spirit." His teaching was to take full possession of a man,

affecting his spirit in all the relations of life—with God, with himself, with his fellow-man. And the spirit he was to manifest towards his fellow-man was expressed by Christ, when He said, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one for another." There is the very spirit desired—the spirit of brotherly love, the spirit of brotherhood, the spirit of human fellowship. If you can import that spirit into the industrial world and into the world at large, then you would have done what is chiefly needed to bring about the world's reconstruction. But is it feasible? Is it not a wildly impracticable proposal?

Christ does not thinks so. Christ declares that love of the brotherhood is to be a distinctive characteristic of His disciples. If it is to be that, it must be practicable. He thinks it to be so practicable that all men shall see and recognise it as His disciples' distinctive mark. "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one for another." And practicable it is, for it was reduced to practice by Christ's first disciples. Tertullian tells us so; he tells us that in his time men were wont to say: "See how these Christians love one another."*

Christ undertakes to create that spirit in the way just suggested by the end and object He proposes to mankind, and that end not the accumulation of material

* Vide, inquiunt, ut invicem se (Christiani) diligant; ipsi enim invicem oderunt.—*Tert. Apologeticus*, cap. 39.

riches which the modern industrial world proposes to itself, and which is responsible for the spirit of the modern industrial world ; but an end already mentioned of a very different kind. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice." That is the end to which Christ trusts to produce this spirit of brotherhood among mankind.

"The Kingdom of God!" Christ came as King—His very name denotes it. He is the Christus, the Anointed, the One anointed as Priest and Prophet, and anointed also as King. His prophets, His angels who foretold His coming foretold that He should came as King. "Tell ye the daughter of Sion, behold thy King cometh unto thee," one says, and another, speaking in Christ's own name, "I am appointed by God King over Sion, His holy mountain." The angel who was His immediate herald says, "Of His kingdom there shall be no end." And Christ claimed the title of King for Himself. When Pilate challenged Him, "Art thou a King, then?" Christ admitted it and spoke to Pilate of His Kingdom. He told His disciples, "I have appointed unto you a Kingdom," and the burden of His message to mankind was the preaching of the Kingdom. "Christ," we read, "went about preaching everywhere the gospel of the Kingdom."

What is this Kingdom of God, and where? Is it somewhere in the clouds, somewhere in the distant empyrean? "The Kingdom of God is within you," —Christ says that the Kingdom of God on earth was

to be established first within a man, in the very soul of a man. There He was to hold sway as King, exercising rule and dominion over the mind and heart and will and conscience of a man. All men were bidden to enter that Kingdom of God established by Christ, and those who took His yoke upon them, who were willing to submit to His rule and become His disciples, those He called, "The children of the Kingdom," the children of the Kingdom in the present, but the heirs of a far more dazzling Kingdom to come, to be attained by each disciple when he should hear the words addressed to him: "Come, ye blessed of My Father; possess ye the Kingdom prepared for you," and a Kingdom to be finally established when the hour should strike, of which St Paul speaks: "Then afterwards the end, when Christ shall deliver up the Kingdom to God and the Father, for Christ must reign till He shall put all things beneath His feet." Then the Kingdom of God on earth was to pass into the Kingdom of God in Heaven, the Kingdom of grace into the Kingdom of glory, and Christ's own prayer, the prayer He taught us all to use, should be fulfilled at last, "Thy Kingdom come."

This is the great end and object of human existence, the goal of human destiny, to reign with Christ in the Kingdom of God hereafter, an end which, in whatever way we try to picture it to ourselves, is, let it be said in all sober seriousness, nothing less than sublime. The end determines the spirit. If this end determines

the spirit of human life, then we shall have the spirit we desire to see infused into mankind, for this is a common end, capable of producing a common spirit, the common end and object of all mankind, and, therefore, to be attained by common, by united efforts, by the efforts of all who are united now in the strong bond of union by membership in the Kingdom of God on earth, and looking forward to being united by membership in the Kingdom of God in Heaven ; united now in the spirit of discipleship, doing the work of disciples now, and striving to earn the reward of disciples hereafter, and, therefore, pursuing their common end and object in the spirit of discipleship, in the spirit of those to whom Christ says : " By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, when ye have love one for another." That is how Christ desires to create the spirit of human fellowship and human brotherhood by proposing to mankind this common end and aim of human destiny.

Get the workers of the world, then, rich and poor, employers and employed, to see themselves as men, not simply as members of some vast world-wide industrial concern the object of which is to amass riches on earth, but as subjects and heirs of a kingdom, their chief aim and object being to amass riches there. " Where moth and rust cannot consume, nor thieves break in and steal." Get men to see that they are not engaged as a body in a selfish scramble for wealth, but that they are engaged in an unselfish fellowship, the

object of which is through union to gain a common end, and that an end worthy of immortal beings. Get men to see that the end and object of human life is not something so gross and material as moneymaking, but that it is something noble and indefinitely higher, something spiritual, becoming the nobility of human nature. Get men to see that they are united together in the forward march of humanity towards that "one far-off Divine event to which the whole creation moves" —the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Get men to see that, and to see that each individual man has his divinely appointed place in that great scheme, a place of dignity, a place of honour, for he is one of those of whom it is written: "O God, Thou shalt raise them up from the dunghill, to set them among the princes of Thy people," and one, therefore, to respect himself and others and win their respect in a manner becoming a man with such a destiny. St Peter said, "honour all men." That is the charter of a man's individual rights. But he added: "Love the brotherhood," that is the reminder of his social duties. Get men to see then, that, while they are individuals with individual rights, they are also social beings with social duties, get them to recognise not only what is due to themselves, but also what is due to others, to both as fellow-members of a great Christian commonwealth, and you will have helped to reinstate man in his proper position, on which we have said from the first the one hope of the world's reconstruction depends; that is

Christ's method, and of Christ's methods Christianity alone possesses the secret. The diffusion of that spirit of Christ among mankind would not only solve the labour problem, it would go far towards reconstructing the world. "Send forth Thy Spirit, O Lord, and they shall be created, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth."

VII.

"CHRISTIANITY AND THE SOCIAL ORDER."

So far we have sought to indicate the lines upon which reconstruction in the labour world should proceed, if conducted on Christian principles. We come next to consider some other methods of dealing with the labour problem which rest on no religious basis at all. For there are many men now-a-days who say that religion is not concerned with the labour problem, that religion as such has nothing to do with it. Religion, they argue, has to do with spiritual matters, but the labour question is from beginning to end an economic question, the labour question has to do not with spiritual but with material things. Or again, religion is concerned with a remote future life, the labour question with the immediate present. And yet again, they contend religion is a private affair of the individual, but the labour question is a social question, the labour question has to do with the collective life of society as a whole. For these and for similar reasons the spheres of religion and of labour are sharply divided—let religion keep to its own sphere.

This is a point of view which must be dealt with

before we can proceed with the task before us, and it is not without some foundation. To take the first point raised, it is perfectly true that the labour question is largely a question of economics, and it is also true that it is not the province of religion to interfere directly in the department of economics. Religion is not political economy. It is not the province of religion to lay down particular economic laws, laws regulating hours of work, wages, prices and the like. It is not the province of religion to interfere directly in the working of already established economic laws, such as the law of supply and demand. It is not the function of religion to interfere immediately in the relations of the employer and the employed, of capital and labour. It is not the province of religion to organise industry. It is perfectly true to say that these things do belong to the sphere of economics, but are we therefore to say that religion has nothing to do with the labour question, even indirectly and remotely? I presume that those whose objection we are considering would admit in some vague sense at least the existence of the moral law, and by the moral law for the present, I mean no more than this: that there exists in human nature a standard judged by which human acts are right or wrong. That perhaps is not an exact definition of the moral law, but it will serve our purpose for the present. And I presume also that the objectors would admit that there is something within every man which tells him whether his

acts are conformed to that standard of rectitude or not, in other words, whether his acts are right or wrong. You may call that thing within a man what you please so long as you admit its existence. It is commonly called conscience. Now do the objectors say, then, that the moral law, the question of what is right or wrong, does not enter into industrial concerns at all, that in the department of economics alone, among all the departments of human life and activity, conscience is silent, conscience is dumb? If the labour question is solely and exclusively economic, then labour is regulated by economic laws alone, and the labour question is to be settled solely on economic principles. What! without conscience! without any reference to the moral law at all! That can hardly be. But morals, conscience matters, are usually considered to belong to the domain of religion, unless one is prepared to say that it is economic laws that decide what is right and wrong, and that conscience is a question of profits and dividends, that it depends upon the fluctuations of the market, and rises and falls with the rise and fall of prices! There are extremists who go even to this length. Let me quote a specimen.

I shall have occasion to allude to Karl Marx more than once in the course of these addresses. Here is a theory of Karl Marx as expounded by one of his most fervent disciples in this country. Marx, he says, " regards the economic order as the groundwork of

society, and as determining all the other forms of social order. The entire legal and political structure, as well as philosophy, literature and religion are constituted"—I beg you to observe that word "constituted"—"are constituted and controlled in accordance with the economic basis." * So it appears that law, politics, literature, science, art, religion, are all a matter of pounds, shillings and pence. We are not to suppose that in these words Karl Marx is protesting against the established order of things as he finds it. He is describing what, in his opinion, the established order of things ought to be. Can cynicism further go ? This is materialism, naked and unashamed. According to Marx, all life is a matter of truck, of bargaining and huckstering, and Napoleon's sneer that Englishmen were a nation of shopkeepers has a wider application than ever Napoleon intended. We must revise our definitions according to this theory of Marx. Man is not to be defined any longer as a rational animal by nature ; by nature man is a shopkeeper !

If, however, the moral law and conscience have anything to say in the economic world, then, because the moral law and conscience belong to the domain of religion, religion has some say in that world, not as meddling in matters of detail which do not concern it, but as witnessing to the moral principles which should govern the relations of men with one another in the labour world as everywhere else, and as voicing the

* Kirkup, *History of Socialism*, p. 151.

public conscience, that is the public sense of what is right and wrong.

The second objection raised to the intervention of religion in labour questions was this: that religion has to do with a remote future life, and labour has to do with the present existence. This objection has been already met in a previous address, so we may dismiss it briefly now. Do the objectors maintain that the present life has no connection with the future life at all? If a man believes in any way in a future life, then surely he must believe that the present life bears some relation to the future life. Most of us believe that it bears a very close relation to it, and the relation is this: that the present life is a time of preparation for the life to come. If this be so, what concerns one cannot be wholly unconcerned with the other—unless we agree with the somewhat heavy joke of the German labour leader Bebel, as expressed by the poet Heine—"and leave heaven to the angels and the sparrows."

The third objection was this: that religion is a private affair of the individual, whereas the labour question is a social question concerned with the collective life of society, and therefore religion has nothing to do with it. In one of the foregoing addresses some pains were taken to show that man is a composite being, not only an individual but also a social being. But man is not built in water-tight compartments. Whatever may be the case in the abstract, in the con-

crete you cannot separate the individual element in a man from the social element. To do so would be to halve the man. The man then is both individual and social, and if religion is, as the objector says, an affair of the private individual, then it is also an affair of the individual when he becomes a unit of society, for society is formed of individual units.

And here let me beg leave to protest against words which I find reported in the columns of the *Times*.* They purport to be the utterance of one who is acknowledged to be a great economic authority, Sir Lyndon Macassey, and occur in the report of an address on "Present-day Industrial Psychology," delivered to Members of the Institute of Industrial Administration. The words to which I take exception are these :

"The individual," he said, "was no longer the unit. In things industrial, the unit was the group of those associated in production ; in things social the unit was the community ; in things national the unit was the whole people." If those words are true, the argument I have just been using at once falls to the ground, but are they true ? The individual no longer the unit ! Since when, pray, was the individual dispossessed ? The individual man is by nature and of necessity the unit, and for a very simple reason, because the individual man by nature and of necessity precedes the group which Sir Lyndon Macassey says is the unit in the industrial world ; he precedes the community

* *Times* for Saturday, 12th February 1921.

which Sir Lyndon Macassey says is the unit in the social world ; he precedes the people which Sir Lyndon Macassey says is the unit in the national world. The individual is antecedent to them all. The individual is and must be the unit, and no modern school of economics can deprive a man of what he possesses by his very nature. Does this distinguished speaker realise the logical consequence of his own words ? If the individual is no longer the unit, but if the group or the community or the State is the unit, what follows ? That the individual exists for the State instead of the State existing for the welfare of the individual, and that we revert to the old pagan state of things described in a former address, the state of things of the old Roman Empire under which the State was absolutely supreme, and the individual, whether free-man or slave, was practically in a condition of servitude to the State. From that condition of things Christian civilisation, we fondly hoped, had long ago delivered us once for all. Is the modern school of economics going to restore it ? The individual *is* the unit, and therefore if religion is a matter for the individual, religion is a matter also for the society composed of individual units. Religion then is as necessary for the society as for the individual. And this, I think, justifies the title of the present address—" Religion and the Social Order." " The Social Order " is a some-what vague term. Any system, any organised system under which men have relations with their fellow-men,

through association with them for some common end or purpose, belongs to the social order. Such associations may be voluntary, as, for example, political associations, scientific associations, literary associations, artistic associations, commercial associations—and the like; and in these, men enter voluntarily into relations with other men sharing the same interests or tastes or pursuits. Or there may be associations which are not voluntary, but which may be called accidental or congenital, associations of men who belong to the same tribe or the same clan or the same nation or the same race, and in these associations men are brought into relations with others of the same blood or under the same government as fellow-subjects and fellow-citizens.

But there is another association, an association which is not voluntary nor accidental, and is more congenital than any. There is an association which is superior to all these other associations, which embraces them all, and to which every one of them is subordinate. It is an association to which we all belong, whether we will or no, and in which we are all brought into essential relations with our fellow men, and that association is the great family of mankind. Men call it often "the brotherhood of man," and that term—the brotherhood of man—is as frequently on the lips of those who profess no religion as it is on the lips of those who do. But the term brotherhood is unmeaning apart from its correlative,

and the correlative of brotherhood is fatherhood. The brotherhood of man has no meaning or significance apart from the Fatherhood of God. The brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God is the universal Social Order. Of that God is the foundation, and with that social order religion, which is the service of God, is directly and immediately concerned. In the origin and preservation of that social order labour plays an essential part, and therefore religion is directly and immediately concerned with labour.

VIII.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE ETHICS OF THE LABOUR QUESTION.

A READER of these pages may say to me, "I agree with all you say about the right of religion to witness to the great moral truths which should govern human industry as they should govern every other department of human activity, and, therefore, I agree with you that religion ought to have some voice in the settlement of the labour problem—but the question is, what religion? You say Christianity. There I venture to disagree, for I am one of those who feel unable to subscribe to the tenets of any Church or sect or creed, Christian or other. My religion is the religion of humanity. I agree with the pronouncement made some years ago in the name of a large section of labour, which runs as follows:—"Christianity has not brought redemption. We believe in no redeemer but we do believe in redemption. No man, no God in human form, no saviour, can redeem humanity. Only humanity itself, only labouring humanity can save humanity."* "Now"—my critic says—"I agree with that statement, and,

* *Berliner Volksblatt*, No. 301.

therefore, while I admit the right of religion to a voice in the settlement of these labour questions, it must be religion as I understand it, and when you assert the claim of Christianity to a special voice in their settlement, there I am unable to follow you. You have said that you propose to consider this question of reconstruction in the industrial world from the standpoint of Christianity. Such a treatment of the question "—my critic continues—" possesses no interest for me, for I have no use for Christianity. Frankly, I do not believe in Christianity."

Now, of course, it is impossible for me at the present moment to prove the truth of Christianity against my objector, but, I should like to ask, is this a reasonable attitude even for a non-Christian to take up? My critic is presumably interested in the question of social reform, and he cannot help knowing, whatever his own private opinions may be, that the Founder of Christianity is claimed by those who believe in Him—no inconsiderable section of the human race—to have been not only a Redeemer, but also a great social reformer; he cannot be totally unaware of the fact that the movement which the Founder of Christianity initiated went a long way towards world reconstruction on a vast scale; that that movement has left an abiding mark on the history of all time: and that it is commonly held to have laid the foundations of our modern civilisation. If he is conversant at all with the state of things which existed in the world in pre-Christian days, he

must realise what a reform that was, a reform affecting the labouring class as it affected every class of society.

I may assume again that my critic is interested in some of the schemes of reform of would-be social reformers of every country and of every age. I have no doubt he has studied such schemes of reform as those of Proudhon and St Simon in France; or of Lasalle and Rodbertus and Liebknecht and Bebel and Karl Marx in Germany; or of Prince Kropotkin and Tolstoy, and even of Lenin and Trotsky in Russia; and in our own country, of Robert Owen and, shall we say, of Blatchford and Belfort Bax, and Harry Quelch, and Philip Snowden and Ramsay Macdonald. These schemes of reform interest him, although it must be admitted that, for the most part, they are still in the region of pure theory; but a scheme of reform like that of Christianity, which can at all events show some practical result, for him has no interest. If that is not a sensible attitude for any student of these subjects to take up, still less sensible is the position taken up by those who think it becoming to meet the claim of Christianity to deal with these subjects with abuse and ridicule—such ridicule and abuse as that of Paul Lafargue, who calls religion—and he evidently means Christianity—" a nightmare "; * or of Liebknecht, who speaks of " the stupidity of the masses who believe in religious forms and dogmas "; † or of

* *International Socialist Review*, November 1903.
† *Berlin Volksblatt*, 1890.

Karl Marx, who says "religion is an illusory sun which revolves round man as long as man fails to revolve around himself;"* or to come nearer home, of an official pamphlet entitled "Socialism and Religion," published some years ago by the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of Great Britain, according to which "religion"—and of course Christianity is meant —"is the outcome of man's ignorance of nature's working." So it would appear that some of the greatest students and discoverers of nature's secrets, because they happened to be Christians, must have been "ignorant of nature's working!" Such men, to take some names almost at random, as Kepler, and Sir Isaac Newton, and Sir David Brewster, and Boyle, and Halley, and Linnæus, and Descartes, and Kelvin, and Pasteur—all convinced Christians, and, therefore, presumably all ignorant in their respective spheres of nature's working. Or, again, men like Galvani and Ampére and Volta, whose very names are identified with the science of electricity, of which they were pioneers; every one of the three sincere Catholics, and because they were that, "ignorant of nature's working!" Or yet again, men like Frederick Denison Maurice and Charles Kingsley and Bishop Westcott and Pope Leo XIII., all ardent social reformers, but all ministers of religion and on that account "ignorant of nature's working" in the social sphere, to which, no doubt, the sneer is meant principally to apply. The

* *Kapital*, vol. i. p. 19.

paragraph I am quoting from this pamphlet concludes : "God did not create man, man created God in his own image." God, in other words, is a mere figment of the disordered human brain.

It will have been noticed that all this abuse and ridicule of Christianity and of the right of Christianity to intervene in social questions, comes chiefly from those who call themselves in some sense or other socialists. I should be sorry to judge of the whole socialist party by the wild utterances of socialists like those just quoted. I do not propose to deal with them in the same way. If such men care to rail at Christianity, I see no object to be gained by railing at them in return ; in fact, I have no inclination to do so, because I am convinced that many socialists, however mistaken they may be in their opinions, and however intemperate in their language, are at the same time sincere in their desire to lighten the hard task of the working man, and that entitles them to be treated with considered argument rather than with invective. And, moreover, I am quite prepared to admit that the end and object of socialism, so far as it aims at the spiritual and material betterment of mankind, is identical with the end and object of Christianity. But when it comes to the way in which that end and object is interpreted, and the methods by which that end and object is to be achieved, there Christianity and socialism differ profoundly. And we must agree with one spokesman of the socialist party,

a well-known leader of the Socialist Democratic Federation of Great Britain, Mr Harry Quelch, when he says, "Christianity and Socialism are absolutely incompatible." *

Thus one class of socialists affects to ignore the claim of Christianity to be heard on social questions, and another meets that claim with abuse and contempt. It would be better if both these classes, instead either of ignoring or of abusing, would devote a little study to Christian methods of social reform. And here I can make no claim to speak for any but that form of Christianity represented by the Catholic Church. I hold no brief for any other. At the same time in what I have to say there is nothing, I think, to which a member of any Christian denomination would find a difficulty in subscribing. It would astonish some of these socialists, I venture to think, to discover that the Catholic Church has a school of thought of its own in which their most cherished schemes and theories for the betterment of the labouring class—which they seem to consider something quite new and original—have been considered and discussed from every point of view, literally for centuries. The Catholic Church possesses a school of ethics which, whether you agree with it or not, has a consistent system, a system based on clear and coherent principles. That school of ethics was founded and developed by some of the keenest intellects and profoundest thinkers who have ever

* Speech at Nottingham, 23rd October, 1907

given attention to these subjects, from St Thomas Aquinas, and Albertus Magnus and Duns Scotus and Dominicus Soto and Suarez and Lessius and de Lugo down to St Alphonsus de Liguori and Pope Leo XIII. in his famous encyclicals on the labour question. This is no school of opportunists—of those who seem to invent their principles as they are wanted, or fit their principles to their practice. That Catholic school of ethics has made an exhaustive study of the principles of human conduct which lie deep down in human nature, and are rooted in the very nature of things. And here my critic may interpose, "You are referring no doubt to the mediæval school of scholastic philosophy. That is hopelessly antiquated, thoroughly out of date, quite unsuited to modern conditions." Is human nature out of date? The principles expounded in the Catholic school of ethics are principles inherent in human nature, and although the condition and circumstances of human nature may change, human nature does not change; those principles will not change until human nature changes, they will not be out of date until human nature is out of date, not till then.

Now there is one important point on which Catholic ethics throw considerable light, a point which lies at the very root of the labour problem, and that is the meaning of the term "rights." "Rights" is on everybody's lips at the present time. We talk of the rights of men and the rights of women,

of private rights and public rights, of political rights and social rights and the rights of labour, and the right to a living wage for your labour, and the right to work, and the right to self-determination, and so on. I wonder has it ever occurred to many of those who use this term so glibly to pause for a moment and ask themselves what it really means? I fear that to many of those who use it, it is simply a shibboleth. But it is one of the terms which in Catholic schools of ethics is subjected to a rigorous and searching analysis, and the result of that analysis is this: By a right, in the sense in which we are using the term now, is meant a moral power to have and to hold something which is undoubtedly my own. A moral power, and, therefore, not a physical power. A physical power is force, might, and might is not right. Now that notion of rights is inseparable from another notion, the notion of law, as appears from the fact that when there is any question of disputed rights, the appeal is to the law—what does the law say? what does the law allow? Right and law are inseparable terms. The same word—jus—means both. Here a critic may interpose, "Do you maintain then that it is law which confers the right? That law, after all, to which you refer for the settlement of disputed rights, is a human law, a positive law. Now, a human positive law can declare and can define rights, but it cannot confer a right." Though there is room here for some distinction, let us waive that for the sake of argument,

and ask our friend what *does* confer the right? Why has that law which is appealed to for the settlement of a dispute, any binding force at all? Where does it get its binding force from? From another law, you cannot get away from law when you are discussing rights, from another law, for the law appealed to binds only if it is a reasonable law. That law, if it is to bind, must be in accordance with the rule of right reason made known to man by the voice of conscience. But this is what is called the law of nature, natural law. So here we are up against law again, and we might trace that natural law further back still to another law of which it is only the expression, the eternal and immutable law of right and wrong, with God as the ultimate supreme Legislator.

So it seems that all rights are founded ultimately upon law. Those agitators, then, socialists or others, who declaim so eloquently about the rights of man, while at the same time they wish to do away with all law and authority, should really be careful. If you do away with law and authority—which is what some of them evidently desire and make no secret of—you are doing away with the very foundations on which rights rest. Rights are founded on law. If there is no law, you have got no rights at all.

But Catholic ethics not only throw light upon the origin of this term, rights. It determines also their extension and limitation, and this also is a very fundamental matter in these questions. I can deal with

that very briefly, because it was dealt with at greater length in a previous address. Right, then, we have said, is the moral power to have and to keep what is my own, and I have my rights. Very well, then, I have the moral power to have and to keep what is my own. But so have other people. Other people have the moral power to keep what is their own. Therefore, I must recognise and respect the rights of other people, as I demand that my own rights should be respected and recognised. But practical recognition of the rights of others constitute duty, and, therefore, just as the notions of rights and law are inseparable, so are the notions of right and duty. Right and duty, as has been already said, are correlative terms.

I need not enter here into the much debated question as to which comes first in logical order, right or duty, whether rights are derived from duties, or duties from rights. That does not concern us. It is sufficient for our purpose that the two notions of right and duty are inseparable. Here again, let me utter a word of warning to those people who are fond of declaring—I have a right to this, and I have a right to the other, totally regardless of other people's rights. Are they aware that those rights of theirs, unquestionable as they are, are of necessity conditioned and restricted in practice by the rights of other people? "Summum jus, summa injuria"—Cicero said many centuries ago.* Even justice pressed to extremes becomes injustice,

* Cicera, *De Officiis.*

and, if pushed to extremes regardless of the rights of others, then rights become wrongs.

These two points, the meaning of the term " rights " and the extension and limitation of rights, are fundamental to the discussion of the labour question, and we must turn to Christian ethics for their adequate treatment.

IX.

"CHRISTIANITY AND TRADE UNIONISM."

We have considered the term "rights" as defined in Catholic schools of ethics, and have pointed out that there is an inseparable connection between the notion of right and the notion of law on the one hand, and between rights and duties on the other. Those are principles we shall have to refer to constantly in the course of these lectures, and now I come to consider one particular right, the right of men to combine together, and I propose to consider that right with special reference to Trade Unionism.

We have laid down the principle that a strict right must be ultimately founded on law. The right to combine is founded on law, on the natural law. For man is by nature a social being, therefore by instinct and by right derived from his very nature, he acts socially. He has the right then to enter into societies, whether these societies be that of the family, or the tribe, or the nation, or the State, or some other association within the State. And therefore, Pope Leo XIII., in his Encyclical Letter upon the condition of the working classes,* declares that to enter such societies

* *Norum Revarum*, 1891.

is the natural right of men. Trade Unions are such societies. A Trade Union has been defined by an authority on the subject, Mr Sydney Webb, as a "continuous association of wage earners for the purpose of maintaining and improving the conditions of their industry."

Some such associations of wage earners have existed in this country and on the Continent for some six hundred years or so. Nobody can have read the history of England without becoming acquainted with what were called the craft guilds in the Middle Ages, traces of which still survive in the livery companies of the City of London and elsewhere, such as the Goldsmiths' Company, the Stationers' Company, the Haberdashers' Company, the Fishmongers' Company—and the rest.

It would be incorrect to say that Trade Unions, the Trade Unions of to-day, are lineally descended from the craft guilds of the Middle Ages; the two differ widely in their structure and functions, but at the same time, there are certain points of resemblance between them. In the first place, they both testify to the instinct of working men to combine together for support; and further, their main objects are substantially the same, viz., the mutual insurance of the workmen and the securing of proper conditions of employment. In the craft guilds of old, as in the Trade Unions of to-day, the first of these two objects, the mutual insurance of the workmen, was secured by grants paid to members when disabled by sickness or

accident or old age, or by relief granted to the widows and orphans of deceased members. And the other object, that of securing proper conditions of employment, was gained by the craft guilds through a policy very much like that of the collective bargaining of the Trade Unions of to-day.

Again, the craft guilds and Trade Unions are somewhat similar in their origin. Trade Unions first came into existence in this country towards the early part of the nineteenth century, for the protection of the wage earners against the control exercised over their labour by employers who held the monopoly in their hands of the instruments of production, such as capital, machinery, and the like. And in somewhat similar fashion, about the twelfth century, although there was not the same conflict between capital and labour then as now, the craft guilds were established to protect the workmen against another kind of monopoly, the monopoly in trading enjoyed by the merchant guilds, the members of which corresponded to some extent to the industrial magnates of to-day.

One would have thought that there was nothing objectionable in either of these associations, either the craft guilds or the Trade Unions ; but whereas the craft guilds in England in pre-Reformation times were sanctioned by the State and blessed by the Church, and, in fact, were organised on almost religious lines, Trade Unions on the other hand were looked upon at the beginning as unlawful associations opposed to

public policy, and had a hard fight to win recognition from the State, a recognition only obtained at last, after a protracted struggle, by the Trade Unions Act of 1876, which has been further supplemented by the Trade Unions Act of 1906. Since that time, Trade Unionism in this country has advanced by leaps and bounds, so that it is estimated that the membership of Trade Unions in this country is something like 60% of the manual workers. That is not surprising when we consider the advantages to be gained from membership in Trade Unions. On the principle that union is strength, Trade Unions give support to the weaker sections of labour, and by the opportunities they provide for collective bargaining, they contribute to the settlement of disputes between employers and employed, to the maintenance of a proper standard of wages and a proper standard of work, to the observance of contracts, and, in general, to the establishment of those relations of goodwill and mutual understanding and respect and confidence between employers and employed on which all industrial peace depends.

Where the objects of Trade Unionism and the results obtained by it are so excellent, it is all-important that the methods employed should be equally unobjectionable. One such method is the strike. Men have the right to combine in Trade Unions ; have the men the right to strike at the bidding of the Trade Unions' Executive ? By a strike, I mean, of course, an organised stoppage of work by the employed in

order to put pressure upon their employers to concede some demand. Is that lawful or unlawful? For adequate reasons and under certain conditions a strike is justifiable, and may be perfectly lawful, but it is important to understand clearly what those conditions are. In the first place, the object to be gained by the strike must be something to which the workers have a strict right, and we have defined a strict right to be the moral power to have or to keep what is unquestionably one's own. And the next condition is this: that the advantage to be gained from the strike must outweigh the disadvantages and the evils which may follow from the strike—a most important principle, for every strike, whether on a large or on a small scale, involves to a greater or less extent evils and disadvantages, such as unemployment, consequent rise in prices, and hence distress, hardships, privations, which not only affect those against whom the strike is directed, but also the strikers themselves and their families and the public at large. And then there is the danger which always attends a strike—of breaches of law and order, of outbreaks of violence, accompanied with destruction of property, and danger to life and limb, results which are seldom absent where men's passions are roused. These are disadvantages which affect the rights of the whole body of the community. But no section of the community may press its own individual rights to the prejudice of the rights of others, still less to the pre-

judice of the rights of all, without some very cogent reason, and the reason must be so cogent as to outweigh evils like those just enumerated.

Two other conditions of a lawful strike follow at once from the one just enumerated, first that peaceful methods must have been tried, and failed, before a drastic measure like that of the strike is resorted to. And secondly there must be a reasonable hope of the strikers' success, for the rights of others may not be invaded or imperilled when there is no reasonable prospect thereby of obtaining one's own. To act otherwise is not justice, is not common sense, it is temper, it is spite. Finally, legitimate methods must be employed in the strike, such as, for example, the observance of just contracts.

These, then, are the conditions under which, and under which alone, a strike is justifiable. If a Trade Union Executive calls a strike under such conditions, the Trade Union Executive is within its right, otherwise it is not. So much as to strikes in general. But what is to be said of some particular kinds of strike ? Take, for example, what is called "the lightning strike." By the lightning strike is meant a strike of workmen without notice given to the employer. Such, I believe, was the strike we all suffered from a few years ago, when, with no proper notice given, though certain mysterious hints were dropped and certain mysterious warnings were vouchsafed, at midnight, one September night in 1919, half a million of railwaymen stopped

work, at the bidding of the National Union of Railwaymen? Is that justifiable? It depends. It may be or it may not. Let me take an instance to illustrate each. Suppose a railway company suddenly lowers the rate of wages of its employees without proper notice given. In that case, the employees have a perfect right as suddenly to down tools and refuse to work. But they are under contract, it may be said. They were under contract, but the contract has been broken, in the case supposed, by the employers. A contract broken by one party to the contract ceases to bind the other. In such a case, then, a lightning strike may be justifiable. But supposing, on the other hand, the workmen have a real grievance, but it cannot be shown that the terms of the contract have not been observed by the employers. In that case, justice demands that due notice must be given before the termination of the contract, and therefore, in such a case, a lightning strike would be unjustifiable.

To take another kind of strike, "the sympathetic strike," that is, where workers with no grievance of their own strike in sympathy with those who have. What about the morality of that? Here again, we must distinguish. A sympathetic strike may be lawful or it may not. Let me illustrate the difference again by instances. We will suppose, then, that the engine drivers employed by a railway company have their wages lowered by the company to a limit below the minimum which constitutes a fair living wage. If all

the other conditions which I have enumerated for a strike are present, those engine drivers may be quite within their right in striking. But now the signalmen on the same line, who have no grievance of their own, strike in synpathy with the engine drivers, and in order to support the claim of the engine drivers to better treatment ; are they justified in doing so ? They may be. Both the engine drivers and the signalmen are servants of the same company. The signalmen may have reason to think that justice will not be done to their mates, the engine drivers, by their strike alone, but only by a common strike of all. They may be justified in striking on that ground. "But," it may be asked, "how so ? The signalmen have got no grievance. It is true that the engine drivers have, but that is no concern of the signalmen, it is no business of theirs." It may be a business of theirs, it may be the business of all servants of the same company to ensure that the company is managed on equitable lines. If the company is not so managed, it is the turn of the engine drivers to unfair treatment to-day, it may be the turn of the signalmen to-morrow. Such a sympathetic strike may be perfectly legitimate.

But let me take another case of a sympathetic strike of a different kind. Suppose there is a strike in the building trade. The bricklayers, we will suppose, strike, and we will suppose also that they have a real and legitimate grievance, and that the proper conditions of a strike are fulfilled. But now the brick-

makers, who belong to a totally different firm, and are under totally different management, strike too, out of sympathy with the bricklayers, and to support them by preventing bricks from being supplied to the firm against which the bricklayers are striking. Here the question may be very properly raised, what have the brickmakers to do with it ? It is possible indeed that, in the complexity of modern industrial conditions, industries with entirely different outputs may be so interdependent as to require to be worked as a joint concern, as a sort of Trust or Combine, in which case the same reasoning would apply as in the case just considered, and consequently a grievance of the bricklayers might fairly be regarded as affecting the brickmakers also. But unless this is the case, the brickmakers must be considered as belonging to a different firm from the bricklayers, and therefore the same reasoning cannot be applied in this instance as in that where both sections belong to the same firm and are under the same management. The brickmakers have no grievance against their employers, as the bricklayers have. And for the brickmakers to refuse to make bricks for their own employers is to punish a just and innocent employer because somebody else's employer has been guilty of injustice, it is to penalise one firm for another firm's delinquencies. Is that just ? In answering that, we must distinguish between two cases—either the sympathetic strikers give due notice to their employer of the termination of their

contract, or they do not. Take the case first in which they do give fair notice of the impending strike. It may be said in their defence, what one workman can justly do, a body of workmen can justly do. Nobody denies the right of an individual workman to abandon his work and terminate his contract after due notice. Why may not the whole body of workmen do the same? But is it "the same"? When an individual or a few individuals stop work, no great injury is done to the employer; he can easily fill their place, and the industry goes on as usual. But when a whole body of workmen strike, the employer cannot fill their place easily, the machinery must lie idle for a time, contracts with other firms cannot be carried out, the stability of the firm may be endangered. What one man can do, a body of men can lawfully do, you say, but one man by ceasing work doesn't do this. Therefore it is not the same thing when an individual strikes and the whole body strikes; and you cannot argue as if it were. A body of men striking thus, after due notice, may not be infringing any strict principle of justice, and yet they may be violating the law of charity. It is charity that prompts them to sympathise with their fellow-workmen, but have they no charity for their employer, against whom, remember, they have no grievance, in the unmerited injury they are inflicting on him? They are violating charity in the name of charity. It may be a sympathetic strike so far as the workmen are concerned, it is an entirely unsympathetic

strike so far as concerns the innocent employer. Next take the case of a sympathetic strike where due notice of the termination of the contract is not given. Here the same reasoning applies as has been already employed in speaking of the lightning strike. Such a strike in the circumstances already explained is not only uncharitable, it is unjust.

Sympathy is an excellent thing, but so is justice. Sympathy is a sentiment and an instinct sometimes even a precept of charity, but to fulfil one's contract with an employer is not a matter of sentiment or of charity, but an obligation of justice, and justice must come before charity. Let us be sympathetic by all means with our neighbour, but let us be just first. We cannot afford to be sympathetically charitable to our fellow-workmen at the expense of justice to our employer. But I am told one nation may go to war in defence of another, why not one body of workmen in defence of another? The answer is, there is no question of breach of contract in the first case; there is in the second. And, it has been said with truth, if this sympathetic strike can be justified, why not a sympathetic lock-out? Would sympathetic strikers agree to that conclusion?

But while it may be perfectly legitimate for the Executive of Trades Unions to call a strike under the conditions laid down, at the same time it must be owned that the strike is a terrible weapon, a weapon to be very sparingly used, and only in the last resort.

Those Executives of Trade Unions who call a strike for trivial and frivolous pretexts, apparently in pure gaiety and lightness of heart, would do well to bear in mind that they are playing with edged tools. That is a dangerous game to play, especially when the tools are double-edged, and may wound the striker as well as the struck. "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword," and if anything would prove to be the undoing of Trade Unionism, it would be the reckless use of the strike.

But besides the strike, there are some other methods which are practised at least under the name and under the cover of Trade Unionism, which Trade Unionism would do well to purge itself of if it hopes to establish itself fully in the public confidence of this country, methods not always confined to moral persuasion or "peaceful picketing." The practices referred to may be conveniently summed up under one word with a rather ugly sound—bullying. The very principle on which Trade Unionism is founded is the voluntary principle. Bullying or compulsion in any form is opposed to that principle; compulsion, for example, to force men against their will to join a union; compulsion to coerce men, when in a union, to strike against their will, and to persecute those who refuse or those who take the places of the strikers, as blacklegs; compulsion to prevent Union men from working with non-Union men, to prevent skilled men from working with unskilled men, to prohibit

dilution of labour even when the national necessity requires it. There may be exceptional circumstances in which it is possible to justify some of these methods, but, as frequently practised, they are all forms of compulsion which are the negation of the voluntary principle of Trade Unionism itself. Trade Unionism was established, as we have seen, to protect the wage earner against a monopoly. Let Trade Unions beware lest they seek to establish a monopoly of their own. Trade Unionism was called into being to resist tyranny, the alleged tyranny of the capitalist class. Let Trade Unions beware lest they themselves resort to tyranny—and tyranny in a Trade Union is just as odious as tyranny in a federation of employers.

Do the men who advocate methods like those just mentioned know what they are doing? They are for ever noisily proclaiming their own rights while they are assailing the rights of other men. In the supposed defence of rights, they are violating one of the primary and essential rights of a man, his right to the free exercise of his liberty, a right derived from his nature itself. In doing that, they are not only putting an affront upon the man, they are doing a wrong to the nature which he and they share in common.

In this part of our subject we are discussing methods of dealing with the Labour Problem which are not professedly Christian. There is nothing un-Christian in Trade Unionism considered in itself. The adoption of some of the methods described would make it so.

X.

CHRISTIANITY AND SYNDICALISM.

It will have been understood from what has been said that Catholic schools of ethics are in entire agreement with the principles underlying Trade Unionism, and that they recognise the right of men to combine in associations such as Trade Unions as a right inherent in human nature—a right, therefore, of the legitimate exercise of which no man can be lawfully deprived. At the same time certain dangers were mentioned to which in practice Trade Unionism is exposed.

And now we come to consider another danger of a graver kind menacing Trade Unionism, and that is, the danger of its being captured and exploited for its own purposes by another system entirely different from that of Trade Unionism, which, if grafted upon it, would completely change its character, and that is, the system known as Syndicalism.

I was surprised to read the other day in a book written by the Assistant Editor of the *Daily Herald*, and entitled, "The Coming Revolution"—the following words: "Syndicalism has not been directly adopted in this country by any considerable body of opinion." Those words as they stand may be literally true. The term Syndicalism may not have been directly adopted

in this country by any considerable body of opinion, but the thing and the spirit of the thing most undoubtedly have.

In November 1910, a Conference on Industrial Syndicalism was held in Manchester, and at that Conference between seventy and eighty Trade Unions were officially represented. That seems to point to the fact that Syndicalism is gaining a footing in the Trade Unions. What then is Syndicalism? It has been said, and I think said truly, that until about ten or eleven years ago, not one man in a million in this country had even so much as heard the name, and that is not surprising, because the name is not English, and neither is the thing. "Syndicat" is the French for union, especially a union in the form of a trust, and "Syndicat ouvrier" is the French for Trade Union. Therefore, Syndicalism originally meant nothing more than a French variety of Trade Unionism. Syndicalism, then is a foreign product. It owes its importation into this country, more than to any one person that can be mentioned, to Mr Tom Mann, who was at one time President of the National Union of Transport Workers, and is well known as a prominent Socialist. Mr Tom Mann, in his organ *The Syndicalist* (July 1910), states that he derived his inspiration from the Confédération Générale du Travail in Paris, and there can be no doubt that he has copied many of its methods.*

* Cf. "The Case for the Engineers," by Tom Mann, in *What we Want and Why* (Collins, 1921).

We shall understand better what Syndicalism means if we consider how it came about. Syndicalism may be called a corruption of Trade Unionism. Trade Unionism, as we have seen, was originally established for the maintenance and improvement of the conditions of industry for the wage earners, and this object may, in certain circumstances already defined, be lawfully sought even by the extreme measure of the strike. But the Strike was not the normal method employed by Trade Unionism for gaining its object. Its normal methods were, whilst striving to cultivate friendly relations between employers and employed, to resort to such conciliatory methods as those of collective bargaining, of Boards of Arbitration, Whitley Councils, or the representation in Parliament of Trade Unions by Labour Members. These were constitutional means, but there was a certain section of Trade Unionists who after a time became impatient with methods like these, they considered them to be slow and tedious and ineffective. They declared that the grievances of wage earners, in spite of these methods, still remained unredressed, and that Trade Unionism seemed incapable by such means of redressing them. The only thing to be done, then, was for these Trade Unionists to take the matter into their own hands and to remedy their own grievances, and the only way of doing that was by capturing the industrial machine of their own trades and managing them for themselves.

There is nothing intrinsically immoral in such a proposal, and it may not even be impracticable of accomplishment by legitimate means. Trade Unions are, or were, reputed to be wealthy bodies. Some Trade Unions, in fact, were reported to be as wealthy as any body of capitalists. What was there then to prevent Trade Unions from becoming possessed of the property of their own trade by lawful purchase and running it themselves ? Whether that would pay economically or not I do not pretend to say, and that is not the question we are concerned with here. We are not concerned with economic questions ; we are only concerned with moral questions, and there is nothing immoral in a procedure like that suggested. But even this method was too slow and tedious, and perhaps too costly for the more hot-headed among the Trade Unionists ; and so they hit upon a new plan. They began by enunciating a principle with a very practical application. The practical application of the principle in question was this : That the workers, that is the wage earners, had no need to acquire the property of their trade by purchase, it belonged to them already, it was theirs, all they had to do was to take it. And the principle of which that is the application was this, that the wage earners are the sole agents of production, and, therefore, the whole product belongs to them. We recognise this at once as a familiar doctrine of Socialism. I have no intention of discussing Socialism in general. I have purposely avoided using the term

in drawing up the syllabus of these lectures, and for this reason: Socialism has as many heads as a hydra, and while you are engaged in cutting off one, another springs up in its place. In other words, there are so many forms of socialism that it is difficult to comprehend them all under any one common denomination or reduce them all to one formula. At one end of the scale there is what is called Christian Socialism. I am afraid Socialists, properly so-called, would look upon that as a very milk-and-water variety. And, at the other end there is Bolshevism, which is Socialism gone mad. Between these two you have got every variety of Socialism, and hence the difficulty of dealing with it. One cannot deal with all the forms at once. I should have to deal with them separately, and while I was dealing with one, another section would say: that is not Socialism at all—by which he would mean to say it was not his peculiar brand of Socialism. His peculiar brand of Socialism, he would maintain, was the only genuine article, and no other deserved the name—on the principle, I presume, that orthodoxy is my doxy, and heterodoxy is everybody else's doxy. I do not propose then to discuss Socialism in general, and I decline to be drawn into the controversy as to what is Socialism and what is not, but I am on safe ground when I say that there is one principle which is common to all Socialism strictly so-called, and that principle in the words of Socialists themselves is this: that the ownership of production, of dis-

tribution, and of exchange of commodities is by nature an ownership common to all. The means of production and of distribution and of exchange are of course such things as land, minerals, factories, workshops, plant, machinery, transport facilities and the like. These, according to the principle just enunciated, are common property. Therefore, they should not be held by any one section of the community to the exclusion of the rest. That would be private ownership of what is public property. Private ownership, therefore, is immoral, and should be displaced by public ownership. But what makes it possible for private owners to hold these means of production, distribution, and exchange is their possession of the power of controlling them, and that power of controlling them they obtain through the possession of capital. Therefore, private capital is immoral, and, therefore, "away with capital," "down with the capitalist." And thus war is declared between labour and capital.

The doctrine that ownership of property is common to all is in one form or another a doctrine of Socialism in general, but it is differently interpreted by different classes of Socialists. By "all," the Fabian or the Collectivist Socialist would mean the State, the Municipal Socialist would mean the Municipality, the Guild Socialist would mean the whole industry in its widest sense, embracing all the crafts connected with it, by "all," the Communist Socialist would mean all and sundry, anybody and everybody, Tom, Dick, and

Harry. But the Syndicalist, when he says that property is common to all, means it is the common property of all the wage earners in a particular craft or trade, and for the reason that they are the sole producers, and, therefore, the whole product belongs to them. This is such a transparent fallacy that it can be dealt with summarily. Let it be said then, the wage earners are not the sole producers. Production, especially when it is concerned with large business transactions, requires brain as well as muscle, it requires heads as well as hands. The wage earners supply the manual labour, the muscle. I do not mean to imply that the wage earners are not capable of supplying the brains as well. What I say is that, as things are, in existing conditions, they do not supply the brains, they supply the muscle. The management supply the brains, and the brains have at least as much to do with production as the muscle. It is untrue then to say that the wage earners are the sole producers, and consequently it is also untrue to say that the whole product belongs to them.

What then are we to say of the other principle just mentioned, that the means of distribution and of production and of exchange are common property? Is that true? I say it strikes at the very roots of the rights of men, and here we must fall back again upon some definitions already laid down. By a right, we said, is meant the moral power of a man to have and

to keep what is undoubtedly his own. How far is that respected in the Socialist principle under consideration? Man is a living being; he has his life, he has a right to his life. A right means the moral power to have and keep what is his, and what is so much his own as his life? Then he has the right to keep and to preserve that life of his. Therefore, he has the right to the means necessary for the preservation of that life, and consequently he has the right to the possession and use of such goods as are necessary for that purpose, and of excluding other people from the possession of those goods. This constitutes private ownership, a right conferred on man by nature. What then becomes of the Socialist principle of public ownership? The bubble is pricked at once, and melts into thin air. But a critic may rejoin, "That is all very well so far as your argument goes. You say a man has a right to the possession and use of goods necessary for the preservation of his individual life, but capital cannot be said to be necessary for the preservation of a man's individual life." Very well, let us go a step further in our argument. I have just said man is a living being, but it has been shown that man is also by nature a social being. Then he has the right, derived from his very nature, to enter into social relationships with his fellow-men, and the first and foremost of such social relationships is that of the family. A man then has the natural right, if he

so pleases, of entering the married state and of becoming the head of a family, and, if he becomes the head of a family and its breadwinner, then he has not only the right, he has also the duty to make provision for the needs of that family, especially when the children are young and unable to provide for themselves, and he can only exercise that right and fulfil that duty by putting by and storing up goods for the present or future use of the family, and by excluding others from their possession, in other words, by acquiring property, private property.

Now capital is only a form of property. By capital we mean property which is held for its market value, or which is used for purposes of exchange. If a man has the right to property at all, remember what a right is—the moral power to have and to keep what is undoubtedly his own—then he has the right, provided he does not infringe the rights of others or violate any moral law, to do what he likes with his own and if he likes to employ his property as capital, who is to prevent him? "But," my critic says, "you are forgetting the abuse of capital, you are forgetting the 'bloated capitalist.'" I quite admit there may be abuse of capital, there may be bloated capitalists. But the best things in life may be abused. Abuse of a thing calls for a remedy. Abuse of a thing does not abolish the right. The fact is some Socialists seem to have property on the brain. They remind me of

Tennyson's "Northern Farmer," who heard the word "property" in the very clatter of his horses' hoofs.

> "Dosn't thou 'ear my 'erse's legs as they canter awäy?
> Proputty, proputty, proputty, that's what I 'ears 'em säy.
> Coom oop, proputty, proputty, that's what I 'ears 'em säy,
> Proputty, proputty, proputty, canter an' canter awäy."

But property is only another name for the means of supporting life, whether the life of the individual on the one hand, or in a more stable and permanent form, the life of the family, on the other, and the right to property is, therefore, a natural right of man. It is quite true that the right to this or that particular property or commodity may be an acquired right; it may be a right conferred by positive human law, and such a right may be open to dispute. But I am not concerned with that now, because what Syndicalists deny is the right in the matters already mentioned to private property and private capital at all, and I contend that in denying that, they are denying a natural right of man. Moreover, are they consistent? Supposing the scheme of Syndicalists were to take shape, and they were to acquire the control of their own trades, and manage them on business lines. I presume they would require some capital. Now why should capital be immoral in a body of capitalists, and not be immoral in a group of Syndicalists?

So far from private property, even when used as

capital, being intrinsically wrong, Christ Himself has sanctioned it. In the parable of the talents, we have the master who gave to one servant five talents and to another two and to another one, and said to each, "Trade till I come." And when he returned, he demanded what return they had to show for their talents. The man who had five talents had put his out to interest and gained five more, and the one who had two had done the same, but the man who had one had covered it up in a napkin and hidden it in the ground, and the master, representing Our Lord, praised the men who had put out their talents to interest and rebuked the man who had not. What are talents put out to interest but property held for its market value, property used for the purpose of exchange? That is capital. So Christ and Christianity have no quarrel with the principle of capital at all. With the abuse of capital they certainly have. But in their attacks on that principle it is not so much Christ and Christianity that Syndicalists are attacking, it is not so much the capitalist class, it is something more fundamental, it is a law of nature, a law not enacted by any human legislature, it is the law of mine and thine. In attacking that, they are attacking human nature, a more futile and foolish proceeding than Don Quixote's in tilting at the windmills. "Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret," Horace said centuries ago. "You may turn

out nature with a pitchfork, it will always crop up again." Nature itself is against the Syndicalists, and nature must prevail in the end. The stars in their courses fought against Sisara, and the stars in their courses are fighting against Syndicalism.

XI.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE GENERAL STRIKE

The object of Syndicalism, we have said, is unsound and immoral, and next we have to consider the means by which Syndicalism seeks to attain its end, and those means, it will be shown, are equally unsound from the moral point of view.

Syndicalism, it has been seen, seeks to substitute group ownership—ownership by the Syndicalist Trade Union—for private ownership, but how does it proceed to do this? Private owners are already in possession. What is to be done with them? Buy them out—it might be said, and it has been pointed out that that might be a perfectly fair way of dealing with them. But that is not the way which commends itself to Syndicalists. Turn them out, the Syndicalist says, and how do they propose to do that? They propose to do that by means of what is called the general strike.

We have had something to say already about strikes in the course of these lectures—about the direct or simple strike, about the lightning strike, about the sympathetic strike, and now we come to consider the general strike. The general strike, as Syndicalists understand it, means the complete stoppage of all work by crafts or trades of every kind acting in agree-

ment. It means, therefore, the cutting off of the supplies of industry at the main. At a given signal, mines, railways, docks, factories, workshops, commercial concerns of every description, stop working; the ordinary means of transport and locomotion cease; food supplies are soon exhausted, fuel runs short; the means of heating and lighting are cut off, with the consequence that, at dusk, the streets and other public thoroughfares are in darkness, wholesale looting sets in, and what is called sabotage, with the inevitable accompaniments of violence and incendiarism, the flooding of mines, the destruction of machinery, the pulling up of railway and tramway lines, until at last, industry is paralysed and the whole life of the community is held up and brought to a standstill. This brings the private owner to his knees. He can no longer carry on. He is driven into bankruptcy, he retires from the unequal struggle. And then the Syndicalist Trades Union steps in and takes over the assets of his trade—if there are any left to take over after this procedure. And so private capital is abolished, and private ownership is done away with in favour of group ownership, and the Syndicalist Revolution is an accomplished fact! What can be simpler?

Now, of course, this is revolutionary, and the Syndicalist makes no secret about it, it is "the industrial revolution." We need not condemn it offhand on that account. A revolution may be lawful. For example,

when a people rises up in defence of its rights and liberties against tyranny or oppression, under certain circumstances, that may be a perfectly lawful revolution. Again, the avowed object of this Syndicalist revolution is to overthrow the existing social order by the transfer of property from one section of the community to another. Always excepting the false principle at the bottom of Syndicalism, that private ownership and private capital are robbery, and supposing the transfer to take place by legitimate means, there may be nothing to find fault with in that either. One need not be a Socialist nor a Syndicalist to hold that there is much in the existing social order and much in the existing distribution of property which calls urgently and loudly for reform. One may be a social reformer without being a Socialist. But what are we to say of the general strike as a means of effecting the transfer ?

The general strike, it will be seen at once, is an extension of the principle of the sympathetic strike. It is a general call to arms in all crafts and all trades to down tools, not precisely because this or that trade, or this or that section of workers, the butchers or bakers or candlestick makers, have a grievance, but because the Syndicalists have. But here a Syndicalist might rejoin, " There you are quite wrong. It is not a particular grievance of our own that is in question, it is a general grievance of all workers. What constitutes that grievance is the existing social order, propped up by the existing capitalist system. That is the grievance

under which all the workers of the world are groaning at the present time, and that is the grievance we are trying to redress. We are justified in calling upon all workmen to join with us in redressing this general grievance." Well, be it so, but by legitimate means. Is the general strike such a legitimate means ? I reply the general strike is an attack upon the rights of the community as a whole, of society at large. Here we are once more on unassailable ground, on the bed-rock of rights. A society is commonly understood to be a moral union of members working in co-operation for the attainment of a common end. A moral union, not a physical union merely, for a society is not constituted by an aggregate of bodies to be counted by heads, it must be a moral union, that is to say, there must be a union of mind and will, there must be a union of purpose for the attainment of some common end. When we speak of civil society or the civil community, we mean such a moral union. Such a community is a corporate body and has rights as such. Its very first right is to expect from all its members co-operation towards the common end, for to attain that end is the very raison d'être of the community. The community, again, has also a right to the means which are indispensable for the attainment of that end. That end is the common good and welfare of all, and among the means indispensable for its attainment are the observance of law and order, the liberty of members of the community to pursue their peaceful

avocations without let or hindrance from others, to procure the necessaries of life, and even its conveniences and amenities. The community has a right to all that is conducive to peace and prosperity, on which its social life depends. All these rights are assailed by the general strike. The general strike paralyses industry, and, in paralysing that, it paralyses the whole social machine. Therefore, it is an attack upon the rights of society at large. "But," the Syndicalists say, "we have our rights too. May we not strike in defence of our rights?" I reply, there may be circumstances already explained in which you may, but, when it comes to a collision of rights, between your rights, real or alleged, and those of the community, you must give way. The rights of the community must prevail over the rights of any section of the community. You are not the community. Happily, we are not all Syndicalists yet. The Syndicalist rejoins: "But you admit that we have a real grievance. You admit that there is much room for reform in the existing social order. So much, we say, as to justify a revolution, and when you have a revolution you must have these incidental disturbances. They are inseparable from all revolutions."

That argument is disingenuous in the mouth of a Syndicalist. "Your general strike," we reply to him, "differs from an ordinary strike, and your industrial revolution differs from an ordinary revolution. In an ordinary strike the strikers strike directly for the

securing of some right, for the redressing of some grievance. This may lead indirectly to certain disturbances of public peace and order, to certain hardships and privations of the whole community, but the strikers do not intend these evils. You do. It is your very purpose. You are out for the express purpose of displacing the private owner of property by making life impossible for him and for everybody else, and the consequent hardships, disturbances and the rest are all part of your plan to hold the community to ransom until your object is achieved. Your own spokesmen admit it. One of them, M. Georges Sorel, after whom Syndicalism in France is sometimes called Sorelism—writes: 'The teaching of experience goes to prove that if the middle classes be harassed by the threat of rebellion they will readily submit to spoliation. The future belongs to the party which is prepared to make the most daring use of the revolutionary spectre' (*Réflexions sur la Violence*, pp. 16, 17.) And again: 'No sooner did the new Syndicalist school of Marxian and revolutionary Socialism awaken to a clear consciousness of the true meaning of its doctrine . . . than it declared itself in favour of the general strike—it was thus forced to enter the true revolutionary movement of the proletariat,' *Ibid*, p. 86. In other words, the object of Syndicalism is to terrorise the community by calling up the spectre of revolution with all its horrors through the medium of a general strike. Its very purpose is to perpetrate horrors."

No ordinary strike intends that; and, therefore, the general strike of Syndicalism is totally unlike the ordinary strike. No ordinary revolution intends it. An ordinary revolution is for the purpose of upsetting some Government or some dynasty or some political institution, and has not the direct intention of provoking disorder; whereas the general strike does intend it, and, therefore, it is a direct attack upon the rights of the community; it is holding a pistol at its head, with the demand to stand and deliver; it is a criminal conspiracy against society at large, and any Government—if it had the courage—would have a perfect right to deal with it as such.

XII.

CHRISTIANITY AND DIRECT ACTION

I HAVE devoted a large part of the space at my disposal in these lectures to Syndicalism, and I have done so not because I believe that Syndicalism as a system, as a working system of group ownership, has gained very much footing among the working men of this country, but because I believe that the spirit and the methods of Syndicalism have. That spirit and those methods have been imported into this country from abroad. The spirit is the spirit of determined warfare, of war to the knife between capital and labour, which can only end in class warfare. And the methods are those chiefly of the general strike, which we considered in our last lecture, and of direct action, which we are to consider next. I have said these things are foreign importations, and that direct action is such a foreign importation there can be no manner of doubt. "Is it possible," Mr Robert Williams asked in the Labour Conference at Southport in the April of 1919, "to use what our French friends call 'L'action directe'"? Exactly, what our French friends call "L'action directe," and what our French friends call "Syndical-

isme," and what our French friends call "Sabotage," and what our French friends call "L'Internationale." These are all foreign names for foreign things. and I venture to say that these things are not only foreign to the speech, but foreign to the minds and habits of thought, and foreign to the principles and the dispositions and the nature of the British working man. They are alien things, undesirable aliens, and what Syndicalism is seeking to do is to introduce these things, especially the one thing we are concerned with to-day —direct action—into this country, and to work it here through the medium of the honest British Trade Unions. That admits of easy proof. There is an institution in this country known as the Industrial Syndicalist Education League. It was founded in Manchester in 1910. One of its founders is that Mr Tom Mann, who we have seen claims the credit of having first introduced Syndicalism into this country. In his organ, *The Syndicalist,* he uses these words: "The object of the Industrial Syndicalist Education League is not to displace the existing Trade Union movement." Certainly not. There is an organisation ready to hand for his purpose, it would be bad policy to displace that. His object, then, is not to displace the existing Trade Union movement, "but to facilitate its development towards real solidarity on direct action lines"; in other words, to make Trade Unionism an accomplice of Syndicalism for direct action purposes, that is, to do what, in an earlier lecture, I said

Syndicalism was bent upon doing, to capture the Trade Unionism of this country and to transform and exploit that Trade Unionism for its own purposes. Those words of Mr Tom Mann are sufficient proof of that statement.

But what is meant by "direct action lines"? The term direct action almost explains itself. "Let us abandon," its advocates say, "the old-fashioned, slow, circuitous, round-about methods of obtaining our industrial ends; those are methods of indirect action. Let us come straight to the point, let us make straight for the goal. Let us seize the industries for ourselves, and the only feasible way of doing that (as we saw in our last lecture) is through a general strike; then let us call a general strike." From this it appears that all that direct action meant originally was the use of the general strike for industrial purposes. That is to say it meant the pursuit of industrial ends by industrial means, no doubt, of an unlawful kind, but still, after all, by industrial means. But direct action since then has completely changed its scope. Direct action now does not mean the pursuit of industrial ends by industrial means; it means the pursuit of political ends by industrial means; in other words, it means the use, for political purposes, of a weapon originally forged purely for industrial purposes. Again let me prove my words by quoting from those who are the authors and the instigators of this system.

There was a resolution passed at the Southport Labour Conference just alluded to, in April 1919, by the Triple Alliance. The Triple Alliance, we all know, is the alliance of the miners, and the railwaymen and transport workers, and the resolution was this : That the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress—Trade Union, observe—should be asked to call a special Conference to consider what action, if any, should be taken to compel the Government to comply with the following terms : first, the withdrawal of the Conscription Bill then before Parliament ; secondly, the withdrawal of British troops from Russia ; thirdly, the raising of the blockade ; fourthly, the release of the conscientious objectors. After pressing these demands upon the Government, and not getting the satisfaction they required, the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress, the Executive of the Labour Party and the Parliamentary Labour Party, met a year afterwards in June 1920, and decided to call a general strike. What for ? Here are their words : " To frustrate all the plans they believed the Government to be entertaining." A general strike not to remedy labour grievances, but to gain certain distinctly political ends. That is what direct action has come to and, therefore, I was justified in saying just now that direct action has come to be the pursuit of political ends by what was intended to be, and what should be a purely industrial organisation. The question naturally arises, what has Labour, as such, got to

do with these political questions at all? It may be said that you cannot separate the two, that you cannot distinguish industrial questions and political questions. Mr Thomas, one of the most respected of the Labour leaders, has said that he can "find no definition which clearly discriminates between a political question and an industrial question." May I be allowed to suggest one: an industrial question is concerned with labour matters, and a political question is concerned with affairs of State. That, perhaps, is not a very scientific definition, nor a very scientific distinction, but it is quite good enough for the average man. If Mr Thomas does not know the difference between the two, the man in the street does. But, Mr Thomas argues, you cannot distinguish them in practice, labour must influence politics, and politics must influence labour, and, therefore, there is really no distinction between them. I grant that labour must influence politics, and politics must influence labour, but does it follow from that that there is no difference between them? The moon influences the tides, and the gulf stream is supposed to influence the climate. Is there no difference between the moon and the tides, and between the gulf stream and the climate? Is this the sort of clap-trap which uneducated, or half-educated agitators in the labour world think good enough for the consumption of the intelligent British labourer? Do let us, at all costs, preserve our faculty of clear thinking. To do otherwise makes

it impossible for any intelligent discussion of these questions at all, it leads nowhere except to pure muddle-headedness. What the proper ends of Trade Unionism, as a labour organisation, are, has been defined by the highest court in the land. Here are the words of the final Court of Appeal in the famous Osborne case of 1913, which declared illegal the use of Trade Union funds for political purposes : " The sole lawful purpose of a Trade Union is to regulate the relations between workmen and workmen, and between workmen and masters, and no action of a political kind is within the definition of a Trade Union, or even incidental to anything therein." I prefer that legal statement to the confused statements just quoted which mix up politics and labour together.

But the Labour leaders urge that Labour, represented by the Triple Alliance or otherwise, is quite justified in pressing these demands upon the Government, with the object of preventing the Government of the day from embarking upon costly enterprises which fall heaviest upon Labour. Well, but do they ? They fall heavily on all the taxpayers and ratepayers of the country. Who has constituted the Triple Alliance the champion of the overburdened ratepayers of the country, and who has made labour the guardian of the public purse ? We are all affected by these things. It is not a labour question any more than it is a capitalist question.

There is no escaping the conclusion that here we

have an attempt, on the part of industrial organisations, to dictate to the Government of the country, and to press upon it their own political views, with the threat of a general strike in the background if it refuses to submit. I say that is an immoral action, and I proceed to prove it.

I am not concerned here with politics, and, though I have had to refer to these political matters, it is only in the course of developing my argument, which is an argument derived from the ethical side of the question, not from the political side with which I have nothing to do. To revert again to our doctrine of rights. It was said in our last lecture that every properly constituted society has certain well-defined rights of its own, and civil society is such a properly established society. Civil society or the community has the right then, as was pointed out, to demand the co-operation of all its members towards the attainment of the end for which it exists, which is the general welfare. But if it is to do that, there must be some directing influence in the society, some authority. Again, if civil society has the right to exact from its members co-operation towards the common end, then it has the further right, as has been shown, to use the means which are necessary for the attainment of that common end, and, therefore, it has the right to see to it that there is a proper adjustment of rights and duties between the different members of the society within, and secondly, that there is a means of defending

the rights of the society against aggression from without. That, too, requires a central directing influence, that requires authority, and, therefore, it is an axiom of sound ethics that no body can be called a society in the strict sense unless it possesses authority. Authority is essential to society; without authority any and every society must disintegrate and break up.

All legitimate authority of course originates from God, the Author of Nature, but the form that authority takes, the seat in which authority resides may come into being in different societies in different ways. The family is a society, authority comes into being in a family in one way, it comes into being in the State in another way, and it comes into being in different States in different ways. In this democratic State of ours, authority is conferred by the democracy, by the community, by the people. The community, I have just said, as a civil society has its rights. It chooses to vest its rights in one central authority. It confides to that authority the protection, the defence of its rights from aggression, whether within or without. It concedes, in other words, to the Government the right to govern, and every properly constituted authority has a right to govern, a strict right, a right founded on human nature. For man, let us repeat again, is a social being by nature. Men, therefore, form societies by natural instinct. These societies cannot exist without

authority, without a governing body, and when that government is properly constituted, it derives its right to govern from the social nature of man, and is founded and based on that. If it abuses its powers, the community which placed it in authority has the power to depose it by constitutional methods, at the polls, but while it remains in authority, it exercises its authority by the will of the people who placed it there, and all questions of home and foreign policy belong to the Government and to no one else. Do they belong to the Triple Alliance ? The Triple Alliance, on its own showing, represents 2,000,000 members, two millions out of the forty-seven odd millions of the inhabitants of these islands, two millions out of the twenty million and more electors on the register. These men are for ever dinning into our ears the maxim that government can exist only by the consent of the governed. But since when did the governed of this country give their consent to be governed by the Triple Alliance ? These men, a numerically insignificant but aggressive minority, are seeking to force their views on political questions upon the majority of their fellow countrymen. That is an insult and an outrage to the rights of the community. They are seeking to seize the reins of government, and in doing so they are usurping the functions of the properly constituted government of the day, and invading its unquestionable right to govern.

The late Prime Minister of this country has declared

the danger from the political point of view. He spoke of: "A party which calls itself Labour, but which is really Socialistic"—and went on to say:—"This Socialism which calls itself Labour, a misuse, a gross abuse of terms, is fighting to destroy everything that generations have built up—private enterprise, individual effort, the stimulus of reasonable gain, political liberty," and he begged all those who believe in these things as the heritage of our race and of our empire to close their ranks and to withstand this attack upon them. I am not talking politics—he was—but I am glad to think that for once, at all events, politics and sound ethics are in agreement.

While Trade Unionism, then, keeps to its own proper functions, while it remains an industrial organisation, and uses its powers to gain industrial ends, it is a potent influence for good in the land, a potent instrument of social reform, but if it allows itself, as it seems to be in danger of allowing itself, to be captured by Socialists and Syndicalists, it will be turned from an industrial organisation into a political caucus; it will be transformed from a beneficient influence for good, into an instrument for pure mischief. While it seeks its proper objects and does its proper work, it has the whole force and support of public opinion in this country at its back, but if it estranges that public opinion then it estranges the strongest force in all the land, stronger than crown or constitution or parliament—the force of public opinion. It is that which rules

us all in the end, and if Trade Unionism alienates that, its days as a useful instrument of social reform are numbered, it will need no outside pressure to effect its undoing, it will have perished by its own hand.

XIII.

CHRISTIANITY AND COMMUNISM (1).

We come next to consider another movement designed to solve the Labour Problem, which has been rapidly gaining strength in this country and elsewhere, the Communistic movement; and it is our business to consider Communism in its relation to Christianity, to see how far Communism is capable of being reconciled with principles of Christian morality.

Let me say at once, from the first, that I have no intention of discussing Communism in its political or in its economic aspect. This is neither the time nor the place for that. But besides its political and economic side, Communism has also an ethical side, a moral side. Now politics, if they are honest, and economics, if they are sound, should not conflict with the principles of the moral law, and morality is a department of religion. Religion is an affair of faith and morals. There are certain moral principles involved in Communism, and it is those which make Communism a fit and proper subject for discussion here.

In the first place, what is Communism—modern

Communism? The answer may be found in a recent pamphlet issued by the Communists themselves, and entitled, "What is the Communist Party?"

> "The Communist Party is a working-class organisation. It is the fighting organisation of those who have no land, no property, no means of getting a living, but by the sale of their ability to work. The party stands for social and economic equality, for that system of society in which those who do the work of the world shall receive the whole of the results of their own labour, and in which those who will not work shall be regarded as the enemies of mankind. The Communist Party declares that the land is common heritage of the people, that the minerals under the earth, the fish in the sea, and all other natural products should no more be the private property of a few than is the air we breathe. The Communist Party declares also that the factories, the machinery, the tools, and so on, have all been made by the labour of the common people, and must become the property of the common people."

And, further :—

> "The objective of the Communist Party is the establishment of a Communist Republic—of a socially and economically equal people. It works for the total abolition of the present system of wage slavery through a social revolution, and

> holds this to be pre-eminently the task of its existence. It seeks by education to win the adhesion of the masses to Communism, and by agitation to stir the workers on towards the social revolution. As a method of attaining the social revolution the Communist Party urges the adoption by the workers of Great Britain of the Soviet or workers' council system so successfully applied in Russia. As a necessary means of achieving the transition from capitalism to Communism the Party stands for the dictatorship of the proletariat."

I must apologise for quoting at such length, but it is important that we should have in their own words what the Communists want, and what Communism means.

Communism, as we know it, is an offshoot of Socialism. It is true that there are Socialists who denounce Communism just as there are Communists who denounce Socialism. Socialists denounce Communism for going too far, and Communists denounce Socialism for not going far enough ; but if Communism does go too far it is only by pushing to their extreme logical conclusions the principles of Socialism. Communists, of course, are all Socialists of an extreme type ; but there is a difference between official or, if we may call it so, orthodox Socialism and Communism. Both deny the right to private property, but Socialism of the orthodox type denies that right in a restricted

sense ; while Communism denies it in an unrestricted sense. As has been said already, Socialism denies the right to private property in such things as land, mines, factories, workshops, machinery, railways, and the means of transport in general ; in other words, Socialism denies the right of private property in what are called the means of production and distribution and exchange. Communism, on the other hand, denies the right of private property altogether, and we had recent illustration of that in the action of the Russian Communist delegates at the Conference at Genoa, and in their demand that the State should be allowed to nationalise—in other words, to appropriate—all private property without any compensation made to the owners—a demand against which Catholic Belgium, be it said to its infinite credit, made such a gallant stand. Communism, then, denies the right of private property altogether. It would not, of course, go so far as to deny to a man the right of ownership of the coat on his back, or of the meal on his table,—of things, that is, that are intended for immediate use or consumption, but it does deny the right to a man to put by to any extent what is intended for future use and enjoyment. It does deny to him the right to accumulate or to hoard his own savings, the profits of his own toil. In substitution for such private ownership Communism would offer us common ownership. Its demand, in its own phrase, is for "the equal distribution among all of the common produce of all." Now at first this

may seem a fantastic and impracticable theory; but if it were only that, it would not be gaining such a hold as it undoubtedly is gaining upon the hard-headed working population of this country. It is true that the actual membership of the Communists as a body is not so large in this country as is that of many other Labour organisations, but its influence, its spirit and its principles seem gradually to be penetrating them all. And this peaceful penetration is the avowed object of Communism, for its object as stated in what we may call the constitution or charter of modern Communism—the Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels—is not to form a separate party, but to endeavour to influence all existing parties by introducing its spirit into them. We can see that influence at work in this country in many other Labour organisations which are not professedly Communistic, for example, the Independent Labour Party. The Independent Labour Party is undoubtedly a socialist body; it is not an avowedly Communist body; and yet in the official programme of the Independent Labour Party I read as follows :—

> "The true object of industry being the production of the requirements of life, the responsibility should rest with the workers collectively; therefore, the capital necessary for industrial operations should be owned and used collectively."

Now, this, of course, is Socialism, as just described,

but it is not yet Communism. But the programme continues :—

> "Work and wealth resulting therefrom should be equitably distributed over the population."

Well, "equitably"—we can all agree to that ; but is that what is meant, or is "equally" meant when "equitably" is said ? At any rate, this sounds very like an echo of that principle of Communism which I have just quoted, as demanding the equal distribution among all of the produce of all.

That is a definitely communistic principle ; but it expresses the grievance which lies at the root of the communistic agitation, and which gives it such force as it possesses, and that grievance is the inequitable distribution of wealth between those who have too much and those who have too little—the glaring inequality between the "haves" and the "have-nots." That is undoubtedly a grievance which does call for a remedy. So far we can all go with the Communist.' But is the scheme of reform which they propound a sound one, and is that scheme of reform based on sound reasoning ? In the first place, is the scheme sound ? Is it in accordance with Christian morality ? I reply it is opposed to Christian morality, for it denies the right of private property, and it seeks to substitute for it common ownership. I repeat what has been already proved, that the right to private property is a right directly derived from nature, and, therefore, it is a right sanctioned by the natural and moral law which

it is the business of Christianity to uphold, for Christianity is the custodian of the moral law. I know the charge that is brought against the churches and the clergy in general—that they are on the side of the well-to-do, that they defend the classes against the masses. I reply that where the principle of private property is concerned they have no choice ; they must oppose communistic theories on that subject, whether among the classes or among the masses. It does not follow that therefore they defend the abuses of the existing system which are in many cases undeniable. It does not follow that the churches and the clergy have no sympathy with the poor, among whom so much of their work is done. That does not follow. But to violate rights is not the way to remedy wrongs ; to violate rights is only to perpetrate another wrong ; and Christianity can give no countenance to that. And it is because this scheme of reform which Communists propound, namely the substitution for private property of common ownership, is opposed to the moral law, that Christianity opposes it. That I must take as proved now, because I have proved it before. So much, then, for the scheme of reform which the communists advocate. But I have said that the reasoning on which they base that scheme of reform is also unsound—for we are not to suppose that Communism is merely an affair of waving red flags and wearing red rosettes and singing revolutionary hymns and delivering inflammatory addresses. If we were to

judge by the utterances of some communists we should be inclined to think it was ; but Communism does not merely make its appeal to the mob, to its passions and predatory instincts ; it does also profess to make its appeal to reason, and it is that which makes it a subject of reasoned argument. To argue with Communism may seem, indeed, to some people a somewhat acadeicm treatment of what is undoubtedly a revolutionary movement ; but at the same time I think the best and the fairest way to deal with Communism is to seek to expose the fallacies on which it rests, and by means of which it traps the ignorant and the unwary. Therefore, I propose to consider some of the arguments on which Communism relies, and to answer those arguments from the Christian point of view.

XIV.

CHRISTIANITY AND COMMUNISM (2).

It might easily be shown, if this were the proper place to do it, that the reasoning on which Communistic remedies are based is economically unsound, but we have to deal with Communism only in its moral aspect, and that is an aspect of Communism, as already explained, with which Christianity is directly concerned.

Communists say then, wealth and material goods, as things are, are inequitably distributed. Very well, we may agree, as things are, they are inequitably distributed, and, therefore, we should conclude they ought to be distributed more equitably, and some means ought to be devised of so dividing them. That conclusion does not satisfy the Communist. "All things at present," he says, "are inequitably distributed, therefore,"—this is his conclusion—"they ought to be all common." "Now, why common?" we ask. "Because," he replies, "that is the law of Nature. All things were common in the beginning of things. They are common by the natural law, therefore they ought to be common now." He continues, "Therefore, private property is theft," as the French Communist Proudhon said, or, as the Russian

Communist, Lenin, has also said more recently: "You accuse us Communists of stealing; well, if we do, we are only stealing what has been stolen already." The original law, Communists argue, was common ownership of property, primitive Communism. Let us revert to that.

Now if Communists could succeed in showing that primitive Communism was the original law, that certainly would go a long way towards proving that Communism is an institution derived from Nature, prescribed by the natural and the moral law, and that Christianity, therefore, as the custodian of the moral law, should uphold Communism instead of opposing it. That is why it is important to consider this argument of the Communists.

They say then, in the beginning all things were common. Now I think there is some confusion of thought here which it is important to clear up. All things were common in the beginning. That is true in one sense, but it is false in another. It is true in a negative sense, it is false in a positive sense. There is an important distinction here. Let me explain. It is quite true that in the beginning, if we go far enough back, and Communists invite us to go back to the very beginning of things, all things were common in the sense that they belonged to nobody at all. That is what we mean when we say they were negatively common. They certainly did not belong to everybody at once. They certainly did not belong in the beginning

to the community constituted as a corporate body. That would be what is meant by their being "common" in a positive sense, and that is the Communists' contention, that all goods were common in the beginning in that positive sense, that they were the property, the collective property, of the community established as a corporate body.

Communists seem to suppose that in the beginning of things there existed a community so constituted with the collective ownership of all goods. No doubt if that were so, then private property, as Proudhon and Lenin say, would be theft, theft from the community, but in the beginning there was no community to steal from. Communists apparently forget that the community is composed of individuals, and that the individual comes before the community. The individual man—we have discussed this point before, let me briefly repeat it now—the individual man is by nature a living being, and, therefore, with the right derived from nature, to say nothing of the duty, of preserving his life. Again, we have shown, also on a former occasion, that the individual man is by nature also a social being with the right, if he so pleases, to the social life of the family, and with the right, therefore, again derived from nature, of making provision for the needs of the family, its present or its future needs.

Now the necessaries of life were there in the beginning, the necessaries of life which were intended precisely for the preservation of the life of the individual

and the family. Those necessaries of life, the Communists tell us, are the common ownership of the community. But in the beginning the community was not in existence to own them. The community only came into existence by a gradual process of formation. What was the individual to do meanwhile? Was the individual to wait for the constitution of the community as a corporate body with the collective ownership of all goods, and meanwhile himself to starve, or live on air? The good things of life were there, intended expressly for him; all he had to do in the beginning was to step in and take them. In doing that he did not interfere with anybody else's rights. These things, I have explained, were certainly common property in the negative sense, in the sense, that is, they belonged to nobody at all, and, therefore, the individual interfered with nobody else's rights in occupying them. Such occupancy on the part of the individual sufficed to convert those goods into property, and that occupancy gave a valid title to ownership, in fact, at the beginning, there was no other title possible. Consequently private property did not originate in stealing from anybody. Private property originated in appropriating to oneself what was there waiting to be appropriated, and had not so far been appropriated by anybody else.

Communists invite us to go back to the beginning of things. By all means back to the beginning of things let us go, but let us be sure that it is the beginning

of things we do go back to. The Communist only goes back so far as the institution of the community; that is not far enough. There is an institution more primitive than the community, and that primitive institution is primeval man, the primitive individual, with, as we have just shown, the rights to ownership of private property. If the Communists would only go far enough back to the beginning of things they would find themselves up against not the community, but the individual, and would discover that the primitive institution is not primitive Communism, but primitive ownership of private property.

I find this theory of primitive Communism stated in its crudest form, in what is, so far as I can discover, the most recent production of official Communism, and that is a book lately published, entitled *Communism and Society,* by Mr William Paul. Mr William Paul, I understand, is a member of the original executive of the Communist Party, and, therefore, he may be presumed to speak with authority. The book is eulogised in glowing terms by the *Communist Review,** as "a magnificent contribution to the literature of Communism," as "its highest expression," as "a tremendous pronouncement," and so on. It is declared by the *Communist Review* to be "a closely reasoned line of argument based on the undisputed facts of social evolution, which are accurately traced from their historic origin in the past ages of primitive Com-

* *Communist Review* for 1922.

munism," and we are challenged to answer it if we can.

Well, greatly daring, I venture to make the attempt, but I must be brief. However, I think the leading argument of the book can be disposed of very briefly. Here it is. The book begins with this heading: "Historic Roots of Communism," and it proceeds—"The history of human society shows that the earliest and most universal form of economic structure was primitive Communism, to which corresponded a definite conception of government, the clan. This form of government may be traced at one time or other in the history of every tribal group, from the *gens* of Græco-Roman society, to the tribe or *totem* of American and Australian aborigines. The two main features of the clan system of society were first organisation by kinship, and secondly, common ownership of the means of life." So we are told that common ownership of the means of life was the original institution prevailing among the tribal and *totem* groups of American and Australian aborigines, and also in the *gens* of ancient Rome.

The writer is on perfectly safe ground when he refers us to the tribal and *totem* groups of American and Australian aborigines. We have no records at all of the tribal and *totem* groups of the American and Australian aborigines. Aborigines were not in the habit of keeping diaries or of writing their memoirs, so there the writer is safe from criticism. Nobody can

contradict him, as nobody knows. But unfortunately for his argument, the writer mentions the Roman *gens*. Now about that we know a very great deal; that is a matter of history, and if the writer will brush up his recollections of the history of Ancient Rome, which presumably he learned in school or at college, or in default of that, if he will consult any standard history of Ancient Rome, he will find that the *gens* of ancient Rome, to which he appeals, was composed of *familiæ*, families, and that every family enjoyed private ownership of its own goods, independently of the *gens*. Where that property was common to the family, it was called the *dominium* of the family, not of the *gens*, and where that property belonged to a private member of the family, it was called the *peculium* of the individual concerned, not of the *gens*. The head of the family was the *pater-familias*, with his *patria potestas*, which paternal jurisdiction extended to the whole property possessed by the family, whether *dominium* or *peculium*, that jurisdiction was supreme, and was quite independent of the *gens*. This can hardly be called common ownership of property on the part of the *gens*, but it does look uncommonly like private ownership on the part of the individual. But the writer is still more unfortunate in associating what he declares was the law of property prevailing in the Roman *gens* with what he conjectures to have been the law of property existing among American and Australian aborigines. According to him, the law was

the same in each case. We have shown what it was in the case of the *gens*. Presumably, according to the writer's argument, it was exactly the same in the case of the tribal or the *totem* group of the American or Australian aborigines. In other words it was not Communism at all, it was private property. The writer actually destroys his own case by that unfortunate allusion to the Roman *gens*.

The argument then derived from "primitive Communism," is historically unsound.

But in justice to Communists it is only fair to say that there have existed social institutions among mankind at different times which seem at first to give some support to this theory of primitive Communism. Take one of them, the one which perhaps interests us Christians most, that is the common ownership of goods which undoubtedly existed in the first Christian community.

In the Communist publication, *Communism and Society*, which I am discussing, I find this allusion to that early Christian Communism. "A re-echo" it says, "of primitive Communism was heard at the founding of Christianity." The allusion of course is to what we read in the 2nd Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where we find these words, "All they that believed were together, and had all things in common; their possessions they sold and divided them to all according as everyone had need." Communists, as might be expected, point to this passage triumphantly,

and make the most of it. They say—You modern Christians denounce Communism, and yet here we have the evidence of the Scriptures that the early Christian community practised Communism; modern Christians then ought to be preaching Communism instead of denouncing it.

Yes, but they omit, in using this argument, one important point, and that is that this Communism of the early Christian community was purely voluntary. The renunciation of private property was not an essential condition of membership of the Christian body. Christians might, if they pleased, retain their private property. That we know from another passage, only a few chapters further on in the same Acts of the Apostles, where the incident is related of Ananias and Sapphira. Ananias and Sapphira had agreed to sell a certain portion of their landed property, and to hand in the proceeds to the common stock of the Christians, but having made this promise, they retained part of the price of the land for themselves, and we have on record St Peter's words in commenting on this transaction. This is what he says, speaking to Ananias, "While thy land remained, did it not remain to thee, and after it was sold was it not in thy power," that is to say, while your land remained unsold it remained your property, and when it was sold, the price of it remained in your power, if you had chosen to retain it and had not forfeited it by your promise.

So this early Christian Communism was entirely voluntary. The same thing applies to the Communism, if we may call it so, of the religious orders of the Church to which also this book refers. It says: "The clearest thinkers in the Church for many centuries defended the theory of Communism, and sought to apply it in many of the religious groups and orders. This was practised by the best elements in the Church in the Middle Ages in the monasteries of certain religious orders. Many of the brightest minds, despairing of human progress, retired to the sanctuary of the semi-communal cloisters, in order to cultivate the lost spirit of fellowship and co-operation which distinguished the clan social group. . . ." and so on. This is certainly an entirely new reading of monastic history, that this was the motive of the vocation of monks and nuns, "to cultivate the lost spirit of fellowship and co-operation which distinguished the clan group." However, waiving that point, this so-called Communism of religious orders is again entirely voluntary. Monks and nuns do not deny the right of private property. All that they do is to forgo the exercise of that right in their own case.

That right of private property, it is hardly necessary to repeat, is a right conferred by Nature. But Nature does not oblige us to use the rights it confers upon us. Men are free if they please to forgo the exercise of rights, whether derived from Nature or from any other source, and so in renouncing the exercise of their

rights of private property, as was done by the early Christians, and has been done since, and is done every day now, by members of religious orders, rights which Nature confers upon them, but which Nature does not oblige them to exercise, they are doing nothing at all opposed to the law of Nature and the moral law.

The mistake that Communists make is this : they are arguing from purely voluntary Communism, so called, to compulsory Communism, to Communism imposed of obligation upon the community in defiance of its rights. That is against the moral law, the other is not. I have said that the writer of this book, *Communism and Society*, is somewhat unfortunate in his incursions into the realm of secular history. He is equally unfortunate, I am afraid, in his incursions into the realm of ecclesiastical and monastic history. The only argument that can be drawn from ecclesiastical and monastic history in favour of Communism is this, that there is nothing morally wrong in that principle of Communism, common ownership of property, if adopted by general agreement, and if founded on a voluntary basis. To that conclusion Communists are perfectly welcome, but I am afraid it will hardly help their case.

I find throughout this book, almost on every page, such phrases as "the historical tendency towards Communism," or again, "Communism is no new thing, its roots lie deep in the past ; it is not the product of agitators, it is the outcome of the past," and so on.

But what the writer has to prove is that these statements are true of compulsory Communism, and that he cannot do.

Some Communists point triumphantly to the views on Communism expressed by one whom Catholics venerate not only as a great Englishman, but also as a Saint, the Blessed Thomas More, in his *Utopia*. That work they claim as a defence of Communism, quoting the Communistic opinions which Sir Thomas More puts into the mouth of his chief character, the Portuguese traveller in Utopia, as though they represented his own. Really, Communists seem to have lost their sense of humour. Apparently, they do not realize that, while Sir Thomas More was undoubtedly criticising some of the abuses of the existing social system, he was at the same time, in his characteristic way, poking fun at the Communistic remedies suggested. The very name which he gives to his imaginary Communistic settlement might have put Communists on their guard. Are they aware that Utopia means "Nowhere"?

Other Communists might with more justice point to the system of "semi-Communism," established in the Jesuit "reductions" of Paraguay, as an *argumentum ad hominem* against the present writer, himself a member of the Jesuit order. They might claim that those settlements, established on a Communistic basis, attained such a degree of prosperity as to excite the jealousy of the neighbouring Spanish settlers, a jealousy

which finally led to their arbitrary suppression, and moved to admiration even such a bitter opponent of the Jesuits as Voltaire, who wrote :—"When in 1768 the missions of Paraguay left the hands of the Jesuits, they had arrived at perhaps the highest degree of civilization to which it is possible to conduct a young people . . . The laws were respected there, morals were pure, a happy brotherhood united every heart, all the useful arts were in a flourishing state, and even some of the more agreeable sciences, plenty was universal."

There, Communists might fairly contend, you see the Communistic ideal realized under—of all people in the world—Jesuit auspices and, moreover, imposed upon the natives by compulsion, not voluntarily accepted by them. This is a perfectly fair argument and merits a more detailed answer.

In the first place, it is quite true that the system pursued in Paraguay may be described as a form of Communism. In the beginnings of the newly-established settlements all the property of each reduction was considered as belonging to the population in common, they worked the land in common, and were fed and maintained by its produce under the direction of the Jesuit administrators, who distributed to each family its supply of provisions and other necessaries at the beginning of each week. Even horses and cattle generally were used in common, only a portion of the land being set aside for the maintenance

of widows, orphans, and the infirm and disabled. At first sight this looks like undiluted Communism. Moreover, it must be acknowledged that this system of common property was not voluntary as in the case of the early Christians or the religious orders of the Church. What is there, then, to distinguish it from modern Communism ?

Now we have already admitted that there is nothing intrinsically immoral in the principle of Communism, and there was nothing immoral in the way in which that principle was reduced to practice in Paraguay. First of all, then, the conditions must be borne in mind under which the Jesuits had to work. They had to deal with a population which had scarcely emerged from the condition of childhood. They were mostly South American Indians of the Guaraní tribe, and their degree of intelligence may be estimated from the fact that, when the Jesuit Fathers took them in hand, they were able only to count as far as the number five, with the help of the fingers of one hand or the toes of one foot. Further, the social instinct, natural to man, was to a large extent dormant among them. They were accustomed to a nomad, roving life, and the Jesuits found it difficult at first to induce them to live together in any considerable numbers. Moreover they were extremely indolent and averse to anything in the nature of hard work.

It will be remembered that we have based our objections to Communism on the ground that it is

opposed to the individual rights of men, especially their right to private property, and to their social duties, including the duty and necessity of labour. But the native population of Paraguay, as just described were at first incapable either of exercising their rights as individuals or of recognising their social duties. They were little better than children, and a system which might be suitable and even necessary for children, and would violate no right of childhood, cannot be employed in the case of adults without violation of their rights. Moreover, as under the Jesuit Fathers' training the natives gradually improved in intelligence and in the capacity to manage their own affairs, a plot of land was assigned to each family, sufficient to supply it with the necessaries of life, on the "three acres and a cow" principle, they were encouraged to cultivate their allotments for their own use and profit, and to use the products for barter among themselves, as money was unknown. Thus, so far from the fundamental error of Communism, viz., the denial of the right to private property, deriving any support from the system pursued in Paraguay, that error received practical contradiction, as soon as the natives could be trained to the proper exercise of their right. Lastly, if the evil results of the Communistic system were absent from Paraguay, that must be ascribed to the strong sense of duty, acquired by the natives under the purifying and elevating influence of religion which reented into every detail of their lives, and to the

control over them exercised by the Jesuit Fathers, whose patriarchal rule, firm but paternal, enabled them to benefit by what was good in the Communistic principle, while it preserved them from what was erroneous or harmful. If the conditions under which this modified system of Communism, as carried out in Paraguay, could ever be reproduced, there would be little or nothing to say against it. But the modern world, with its long established, intricate industrial system, cannot go back to the elementary methods of its infancy, and, even if it could, the methods pursued in Paraguay would hardly satisfy our modern Communist, especially as they depended from first to last on religious sanctions, without which they could not have been made to work for a single day.

On the abortive attempts to found Communistic colonies made by the Shakers in America and the followers of Robert Owen in this country and elsewhere, it is hardly necessary to dwell. They have all proved complete failures. And Bolshevism in Russia, which began as Communism, has come to be an arbitrary and blood-thirsty despotism, even surpassing that of the French Revolution, and should suffice as a warning for all time and for all nations against experiments in Communism.

Now we go on to consider a totally different argument used by Communists in favour of their fundamental doctrine, the common ownership of all goods, and it is this: "All goods," they say, "should be

held in common to be equally distributed among all," and when we ask why, we are told because "All men are by nature equal. It is private property that gives rise to the inequalities among mankind. It is that which causes artificial social and class distinction, Abolish private property, and these inequalities will disappear, and men will be restored once more to that natural equality, one with another, which is theirs by nature."

We have just considered the Communist theory that all goods are common by nature, and now we have the theory that all men are equal by nature. It is another of those half-truths which are proverbially more misleading than downright falsehoods. The statement that all men are by Nature equal, is true in one sense, it is false in another. It is true in the sense that all men have the same nature in the abstract, the same human nature, but in the concrete all men have not the same human nature. Compare human nature as individualised in one man with human nature as individualised in another, and you will see they are far from being equal. There are moral and physical inequalities. There are inequalities in attributes of mind and body, in capacity, in skill, in disposition, in enterprise, and in a thousand other ways. It is largely due to these natural inequalities that some men succeed and prosper and others fail. Even "equality of opportunity," of which we hear so much nowadays, would not secure equality of result. Owing

to their powers, natural or acquired, some men would profit by those opportunities more than others ; it is due to those very inequalities of nature that some men acquire possession of property and others do not. Consequently it is not, as Communists say, private property so much that gives rise to inequalities, it is the inequalities that give rise to property. Property is largely the outcome of those natural inequalities. The way then to make all men equal is not to abolish private property, the way to make all men equal is, if you can, to abolish their natural inequalities. That of course Communists are incapable of doing, but what they would like to do, if they had the power, would be this, they would refuse to allow these inequalities their natural play. They would refuse to allow men who are more fortunate than their fellows through their superior capacity or industry, to profit by those qualities. They could perhaps impose some sort of uniformity upon men. They could enforce the compulsory sharing of all goods among men, of the richer with the poorer, of the more industrious with the less industrious, and so they could produce a dead level of equality. But that those who have greater industry or ability, and have thereby earned their savings, should share the profits of their labour with those who have not earned them ; would that be equal treatment of men ? That would be preferential treatment, and it is to this, to preferential treatment, that this Communist theory of the equality of mankind is reduced in practice.

But in preaching this doctrine Communists are not only false to their own principles, they would defeat their own object. That object, they tell us, is to secure a larger distribution among all of the common produce of all. Now production depends upon work and men require an incentive to work. The chief stimulus that a man has in his work is the prospect of reaping the fruits of his own toil. That is a man's chief stimulus to industry in his work, and to perseverance in his work, and to pride in his work. But if a man, instead of reaping the fruits of his own toil, has to hand over those fruits to the community, his chief incentive to industry is gone. That was very clearly seen only two years ago in the almost universal protest that was made in this country during the coal dispute, against the proposal to pool the profits of the mines, under which system the richer and more prosperous mines should share their profits with the less prosperous. It was said at once that this would deprive the industrious miner of his chief stimulus to industry, it would put a positive premium on indolence ; it would not only penalise the more industrious miners, but it would encourage the slackers in their methods of "ca' canny," and induce them all the more to keep their mines going at an unprofitable rate. If this would be the result of such a system when applied to one particular industry, we can imagine what its result would be if applied to all. Work would languish, production would fall off, and instead of there being more to dis-

tribute, as Communists fondly hoped, there would be less. But to pursue this line of argument would lead us into the economic question, which it is not my business to discuss. I only mention it here to show that you cannot fly in the face of the laws of Nature with impunity; any such attempt must recoil on the heads of its authors. Nature will have its revenge.

Against the right to private property all that Communists can urge are these imaginary rights to common ownership and to equality of distribution, which break down under examination and cannot for a moment prevail against a right conferred by natural law.

Christianity stands for the moral law in this, as in all other matters, and hence in their fundamental principles, Communists are brought into direct conflict with Christianity.

XV.

CHRISTIANITY AND COMMUNISM (3)

HAVING shown that the principles and arguments of Communists are in conflict with Christian morals, we have next to show that the methods by which they seek to establish their system are un-Christian also. Communists differ among themselves as to the form of common ownership they would set up. They differ also as to the methods to be employed. Some among them are in favour of what are called Evolutionary methods of Communism; others are in favour of Revolutionary Communism. Those in favour of Evolutionary Communism consider that Communism is destined to come sooner or later by a natural process of evolution. All that they have to do in consequence is to facilitate and to hasten its coming by gradual and progressive means. They would proceed by instalments, for example, by the gradual socialisation of one industry after another. Those methods do not satisfy the Revolutionary Communists; like the Syndicalists, the Revolutionary Communists are in a hurry, they are in favour of more summary methods.

It is hardly necessary after what has been said to

discuss Evolutionary Communism, the more so because the danger from Evolutionary Communism, though real, is more remote, whereas there are not wanting signs at the present moment that the danger from Revolutionary Communism is of a more urgent kind. Therefore, I propose to consider here Revolutionary Communism alone. In doing so, as I have said repeatedly, I am not discussing its dangers, political or social or economical, but only its moral and, therefore, its religious dangers.

There is this advantage in discussing Revolutionary Communism, that it leaves no doubt at all as to what it wants and how it wants to get it. We quoted in a former lecture from a manifesto of the Communist Party of Great Britain, that they propose to set up a system which they describe, apparently with unconscious irony, as "similar to that so successfully applied in Russia." Revolutionary Communism is, in fact, identical with Bolshevism, and Revolutionary Communists take no pains to conceal the fact.

The object then of this Revolutionary Communism, or if you prefer to call it so, Bolshevism, is to upset the whole existing system, the whole existing régime, political, social, economic, moral, religious, and to do so by forcible means. As a step towards doing so, the first measure to be taken is to divide the whole population into two distinct classes which are supposed to be natural enemies one to another, and which are described as the bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the proletariat

on the other, the proletariat being the wage-earners and the bourgeoisie comprising all the other classes of the community.

But people, as a general rule, are not in the least conscious of any such sharp antagonism separating them from their neighbours, with whom they are quite content, notwithstanding all their differences, to live on the whole on terms of amity. Therefore, it becomes necessary for the Communists to create this antagonism by artificial means. So they proceed to carry out what they call "moulding the mentality of the proletariat," and this they do by developing "class consciousness."

We can gather at once what is meant by "class consciousness," when we find that the bourgeoisie are invariably described by the Communists as the "exploiting" and the "ruling class," the "capitalist class," and the proletariat as the "exploited" and the "oppressed." So this class consciousness consists in a conviction on the part of the wage-earners that they are the victims habitually of gross injustice and oppression at the hands of the other classes of the community.

All this, of course, is done with the object of stirring up class warfare, the first step being to develop class consciousness, that will engender class hatred, the second, and that in its turn will provoke class warfare. This programme they proceed to carry out by the most systematic and methodical measures. They begin

with the children of the working classes, among whom they have instituted a complete educational campaign. Many of us, I daresay, will have seen on recent May days in Hyde Park, cars and carts and lorries and vans discharging their freights of eager, excited children, all plentifully supplied with red flags and bedecked with red favours, red sashes and red rosettes, and vigorously singing hymns of the red revolution. These are the children of the Communist schools, some of them pupils of the Socialist Sunday schools, and others of schools of a more advanced type, the "proletarian schools." The chief subject of instruction in the curriculum of these schools seems to be class hatred. The child, at its admission into the school, is put through a ceremony of initiation, it is called a "naming" service, a sort of Communist Christening. He is named—I am taking this from the formula employed—"as a child of the revolutionary working class." He is told "he is to work for the industrial republic in which every child will have as his birthright everything in life. There will be no mansions and no slums, no kings or queens, no lords or dukes—no masters or servants, no rich or poor, for in the industrial republic all shall be free. We live and fight and work for that day"—the new *Der Tag*—"we name our children for that purpose."

In keeping with this introductory rite, which is evidently a travesty of the Sacrament of Baptism, there is an equally blasphemous parody of the Ten

Commandments, "The Proletarian Ten Command ments" they are called, and the children are made to commit them to memory. Here are two of them as a specimen : "Thou shalt teach revolution." "Thou shalt wage the class war." That this teaching is intended to be blasphemous is evident from the views upon religion inculcated in some of these schools. In a catechism in use in one such school at least, the question is asked, "Is Jesus Christ the Son of God ?" And the answer is : "There is no God, and, therefore, there is no Son of God." Of the character of the ordinary class books put in the children's hands, we can judge by this extract which I quote verbatim :—

> "Cast your eyes round the workshops, and say, 'These things are ours, we will take them—yes, take them by force if need be.'"

Moreover, children are brought up in these schools without any notion of discipline, taught to call their teachers, not "Teacher," or "Miss," but "Comrade." Can you imagine a more effective plan of rearing young hooligans ? The same ideas are impressed upon the minds and memories of the children, in the way perhaps best calculated to do so, through their school songs, or hymns, if they can be called such. Here is one specimen of this doggerel :—

Class conscious, we are singing ;
Class conscious all are we ;
For Labour now is digging
The grave of the Bourgeoisie.

And here is a specimen of a hymn, obviously a parody of one well known :—

> We, the rebel children sing,
> Perish every court and king,
> We've a world to save and win,
> For the Revolution.

Now, whatever else may be thought of these methods, one thing is perfectly clear, they, especially the last mentioned, are most effective for their purpose, that of rearing a generation of children imbued with class hatred. "Let me make a nation's songs ; I care not who makes its laws." We all know what a large part International hatred had in bringing about and embittering the great war from which we have just emerged, and we know how studiously that hatred was inculcated in the minds of the children of the chief enemy nation. Here we have the same system at work, only in this case the hatred instilled in the minds of the children is hatred, not of a foreign foe, but of their fellow countrymen, and the natural result would be, not a European War, but civil war in every land. That this war is the very objective of Revolutionary Communism they tell us in their own words. At a Congress of Communists which was held in 1915, when the great war was being waged, they spoke contemptuously of that war, they called it "The Capitalists' War." Here is what they say in their published statements : "The Capitalist War is not our War. The only War that really matters is the Class War."

There were some 217 of these schools in existence in 1912, with about 14,000 unfortunate pupils. Since then their number has very much increased, to such an extent, in fact, as to become a positive national danger, so that a Bill is at the present moment before Parliament, to do something for their suppression.

But this educational campaign among the children does not end with their schooldays. From school they are drafted into "The Young Communist League," or what are called, "Communist Groups," and they have got their special children's organ, *The Young Communist*, which, according to its official advertisement, is intended to be read by "youthful rebels."

Nor is this propaganda confined to the children, either in school or when they have just left school. It extends also to their elders. There are other educational agencies intended for them. I desire to be scrupulously just in speaking of those educational agencies; I do not want to say one unfair word about the Labour colleges. I know that those Labour colleges were instituted at first solely to bring higher education within the reach of the working classes, and to fit them the better for their work by education of both a general and a technical kind. Many of these Labour colleges, like the Ruskin College at Oxford, and others, have continued to do that work for which they were originally designed, but there are other Labour colleges which have become infected with the

extreme Anarchist views of Revolutionary Communism, and one such Institution, I say without fear of contradiction, is the Central Labour College. That Labour College in London has a branch in Glasgow, and the head of that Scottish Branch is also the head of the Communist Party in Scotland, which has openly associated itself with Bolshevism in Russia. In a speech delivered in the Kingsway Hall, as recently as 1919, that gentleman used these words: "We must do our best to emulate Russia by overthrowing the tyrant at home. We are already striking terror into the hearts of the propertied classes. On with the Class War! The Class War is coming here, get your guns ready!" From these sentiments of its head, we can judge of the character of the teaching imparted in that educational establishment.

But again there is further an extensive and a most insidious propaganda being carried on in the community at large. I quote from the Rules of Membership of the Communist International. These are its words: "The class struggle in every country is reaching the threshold of civil war. There must be general propaganda and agitation of a definite Communistic character. Communists must assist the revolution by illegal means where legal means are ineffectual. A persistent and systematic propaganda is necessary in the Army, where Communist groups should be formed, in the Navy, in every military unit. Similar methods must be employed in Trade Unions, in Co-operative

Societies, in all agricultural workers in rural districts, and in the Press."

I have mentioned the Communist International. There is no need to explain here the origin of the three Internationals. It is well known that the International was originally formed with the idea of uniting together the workers of all countries in defence of their common interests, a thoroughly praiseworthy object, but there can be no doubt, judging from the utterances of the more recent forms of International, such as The Third International of Moscow, that these associations are now being used to unite together the workers of the world in opposition to all other classes of the community, and so to introduce class warfare on a universal scale, and this at a time when peace is more than ever a crying need.

In speaking of the methods employed by Revolutionary Communism, or Bolshevism, I have said nothing of its system of government by Soviets, or Workmen's Councils, of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the rule of the People's Commissaries, and the like. These things all belong to Communism on its political side, and with that I have nothing to do. But considering Revolutionary Communism on its moral side, with which we Christians have everything to do, it is perfectly obvious that this teaching in its development of class consciousness with a view to engendering class hatred, and so bringing about universal class warfare, is diametrically opposed to the second great Command-

ment of Christianity, which is like unto the first, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour," and is, therefore, totally irreconcilable with Christianity.

While delivering this series of addresses I have received a letter, the writer of which signed himself "A Catholic Communist." I hope enough has been said to convince any such person that "A Catholic Communist" is a contradiction in terms. But, apart altogether from the precepts of Christianity, there is a dictate of Nature, an instinct of the nature even of the lower animals as well as of the higher, and that dictate of Nature is love of one's kind. To preach, as Revolutionary Communists preach, class hatred, is to preach hatred of one's kind, and is to endeavour to corrupt Nature at its very source. We have only one word for crimes like that. We call them "unnatural." But what shall we say then of the attempt of Revolutionary Communists to take advantage of the guilelessness of innocent children, and to sow the seeds of hatred in simple, confiding childhood, whose natural instinct is all for love? I will not waste any epithets on such a revolting proceeding. I will leave it to the judgment of all right thinking and decent minded men and women, and there I am content to leave it. The law of Christianity is the law of love. The law of Revolutionary Communism is the law of hate. That is enough to determine its relation to Christianity.

XVI.

CHRISTIANITY AND CAPITALISM

It is persistently urged in certain quarters that any suggestions for the solution of the Labour Problem are fruitless while social conditions remain as they are. These conditions, it is maintained, produce an unfair distribution of the good things of life, they aggravate class distinctions, they keep the workers of the world who form the great majority of mankind in a position of inferiority amounting not merely to subjection, but in some cases oven to degradation, and, consequently if not the actual cause of the Labour Problem, they at least tend to render it more acute.

These unfair conditions are said by many to be inseparable from the system, which has come to prevail in the industrial world, the system known as Capitalism. Certainly any system, which can be shown of necessity and by its very nature to tend to such results as those just described, can hardly be called Christian, and hence we come to consider how Capitalism stands in relation to Christianity.

And first we must form a clear idea of what is meant by Capitalism, and by Capitalism in the in-

dustrial world, because it is only with that we are at present concerned.

Capitalism, so understood, has been defined as the organisation of business on a large scale by employers possessed of an accumulated stock of wealth, which enables them to acquire the raw materials, the tools and the hired labour which their business requires so as to produce further wealth in the shape of profit.* If Capitalism be so understood, Capital is wealth used by industrial methods to produce wealth.

For a better understanding of our subject, we must cast a glance at the rise of Capitalism. It may surprise us to find that the system is of comparatively modern growth. Of course, there have always been wealth, and stores of accumulated wealth, in the world, but, until about a century and a half ago, until the middle, let us say, of the eighteenth century, the wealth which existed was not used on any large scale for industrial production. The "treasure" which lay in the exchequers of kings and nobles or in the coffers of the richer states and cities was chiefly used either for military purposes, purposes of attack and defence or conquest, or for works of public utility, such as the laying-out and beautifying of cities, the erection of noble buildings, the making of roads, bridges, watercourses and the like, or for mere ostentation and display. Such wealth was employed for purposes of consumption on objects like these, not put by for

* Hobson, *Evolution of Modern Capitalism*, p. 1.

industrial profit. No doubt wealth was hoarded and was largely employed for money lending, and so was used for profit, but it was not yet used for the profit derived from industrial production on a large scale. And for a simple reason. Because such production was impossible until the invention of machinery. Then reserves of wealth became necessary for industrial purposes.

To understand that necessity, compare industry a century and a half ago before the introduction of machinery with industry now. To take an example from one branch of industry only. Compare the work turned out by the spinning wheel or spinning jenny of the cotton spinner or by the hand loom of the weaver with the output of one of the big mills or factories of the present day. The hand worker of those days found a ready market for his goods in his own immediate neighbourhood, and the modest profit so obtained sufficed for his daily needs and the upkeep of his trade. He needed no large store of wealth for its development. But with the introduction of machinery all that was changed. Machinery required large and ever-larger premises to house it, its use led to the discovery of new and improved industrial processes, this necessitated greater divison of labour and larger supplies of workers. Business on this scale was impossible without large reserves of money available first to start it and then to carry it on and develop it, and money so used is what we mean by capital. Hence

the necessity of capital for industrial purposes. I am not for the moment considering possible abuses of capital, nor in whom the capital is vested, whether in the hands of individual employers, or of the State under some process of nationalisation of industry, or of the employees themselves, through Trade Unions, Workers' Guilds and the like. Nor am I considering whether this gigantic growth of industry is a good or a bad thing for the highest interests of mankind. All that I say is that, in the modern development of trade and commerce, capital is a simple necessity as a means of increased productivity, and, therefore. as a necessary instrument of production. In capital so considered there is nothing intrinsically wrong and consequently nothing un-Christian.

But capital is not the only factor in production, there is another, labour. Without labour capital alone would be useless, in fact its employment on its present scale would be impossible. That only became possible when labour became available on a correspondingly large scale. It has been explained that one reason why capitalism in industry is of such modern growth is the previous lack of modern machinery. But this was not the only reason. Another reason was the deficiency, till modern times, of an adequate supply of labour. That was due to a variety of causes. It was partly due to the sparse population. In the middle of the eighteenth century the population of England and Wales was estimated at no more than

six millions, *i.e.* about the population of London alone at the present time. Moreover, large numbers of these were engaged in agricultural pursuits, tied to the land as farmers or farm labourers. About the time we are speaking of, agricultural and other changes detached this rural population from the land and drove it to seek employment elsewhere. Its members were unable from want of training to secure a footing in any trade as skilled artificers. All they could offer was their labour in exchange for wages. This was exactly what capitalists needed, and thus came to be formed the large industrial army of wage-earners of the present day. Labour, then, has its own share in the development of the capitalist system in industry, an important share. In due proportion and degree, labour is as essential to the system as capital itself, for without labour capital must have lain idle and unproductive. Capital and labour then are joint partners in the capitalist system of the present day, joint producers, with what consequences we shall see. But here it is enough to ask, is there anything un-Christian in such a system considered in itself? Could we desire in fact a better foundation for the Christian ideal of industry already described, viz., joint co-operation for the mutual benefit of employer and employed and for the common good?

It would be idle to pretend that it always so works out in practice, and we come next to consider why.

The answer would seem to be that for its success the

Capitalist system depends upon the co-operation of the two elements, Capital and Labour. But actual co-operation is impossible without the spirit of co-operation, that spirit is too often wanting, and that is the chief defect in the system's working. This is due to faults on both sides. Let us take each separately, and first the capitalist employer.

The employment of capital has led to an enormous increase in industrial operations and to a corresponding increase in profits. And human nature being what it is, this has stimulated the natural desire for wealth, and has induced many men with capital at their command to engage in industry simply and solely for profit—thus has come into being a new spirit, the capitalist spirit.

Capitalism, as has been said, is a comparatively new thing in the world. So is the capitalist spirit to which capitalism has given rise. Not as though avarice and covetousness and the greed of gain are new things, but the capitalist spirit is. It has been defined as "the disposition to employ accumulated wealth in further production for the sake of profit."* This employment of wealth only became possible with the evolution of modern capitalism, and hence the capitalist spirit is of modern growth too. It is a spirit in marked contrast with the more romantic and adventurous spirit which characterised earlier times, and, what is more to our purpose, it is fatal to the co-operative

* *Evolution of Modern Capitalism*, Hobson, p. 21.

spirit just mentioned. It would be unreasonable, of course, to condemn people for engaging in business for profit. Men do not go into business for the good of their health. But when profits attain the gigantic proportions of some industries at least of the present day, the question naturally arises—how are they applied, how distributed? They are the product of the co-operation of Capital and Labour. Is it the co-operative spirit that governs their distribution or the capitalist spirit? We can hardly doubt which it is where the capitalist employers amass colossal fortunes in an industry from which their employers derive a bare subsistence. I am not saying that the acquisition of wealth, even of great wealth, in industry is wrong. But all wealth has its duties and obligations, and wealth acquired by capitalist enterprise has duties and obligations peculiarly its own. And that from the very nature of the capitalist system. In that system, we have shown, Capital and Labour co-operate in production and in the making of the profits which result. Clearly, then, when it comes to a distribution of profits, one of the first duties of the capitalist employer is to those who have helped him to make them. That is why a fair wage to the workers should be one of the very first charges on industry. But that is not all. Capital and Labour are partners in production. Let us grant that the capitalist is the predominant partner. His capital has created the business, has financed it, his business capacity and energy have developed it,

his foresight and enterprise have found fresh markets, he has to face its risks and bear its anxieties. These things are his and he has certain rights in respect to them. A right, we said in a former address, is the moral power to have and to keep what is one's own. His capital and his business qualities just enumerated are the capitalist's own and so are the profits accruing from them. He has unquestionably a right then to a share, we may even say to the lion's share, in the profits, a share commensurate with his share of the production in a business which could not exist without him. But the workers are partners in production, and they have their rights, too, their rights, *i.e.* the moral power to have and to hold what is their own. Their labour is their own and the use they put it to, and the use they have chosen to put it to is to this industry ; that is their contribution to the partnership. And this, as has been pointed out, is as essential to the success of the industry as capital itself. The worker, then, as well as the capitalist, has a right to the fruit of his toil. This might seem to give the worker a strict right to a share in the profits. And some people would maintain that it does. Others would argue that the relation of labour to a rise in profits is too remote and indirect to establish any such strict moral right. Moreover, the wage-earners have contracted with their employers to accept their wages in satisfaction of all demands and, provided those wages are fair and not imposed under duress, the workers cannot

be held to have a strict right to further remuneration. However, it may be safely said that the co-operation between capital and labour in the capitalist system gives the worker a strong claim to generous consideration at least at the hands of his employer in the disposal of the profits. How this claim is to be met, on what scale the remuneration is to be calculated and apportioned to the worker, whether by some system of profit-sharing, which would seem to involve as its logical consequence a sharing of losses as well as of profits, or of co-partnership, or bonuses, or premiums, I do not pretend to say. I am concerned only with moral principles, and those are questions of practical economics with which I am not concerned, and as to the comparative advantages or disadvantages of which there may be difference of opinion. But as to the claim of the worker in equity at least, if not in strict justice, to some share in the wealth he has helped to create, there ought to be none, and the capitalist employer ought to be the first to recognise it, as many, I am glad to think, are beginning to do. Theirs is the co-operative spirit, and that is the Christian spirit.

But there are, on the other hand, capitalist employers who forget that capital has its duties as well as its rights and that one of its primary duties is towards the labour which has helped to turn it to profitable use. These are the employers who cut wages to the narrowest limit for the express purpose of increasing profits and then use those profits simply to add to the capital and

enlarge the business, and by means like these acquire large fortunes which are too often spent in extravagance and luxury and self-indulgence. Theirs is the capitalist spirit. It is one of the forms of the profiteering spirit, and that spirit is un-Christian, it is the spirit of those who defraud labourers of their wages, a sin crying to Heaven for vengeance. It is this spirit of many employers that has brought the capitalist system into disrepute and made a byword of "the bloated capitalist." And it is this more than any other cause that can be named that has brought capital into conflict with labour.

Can we be surprised at the resentment of the workers when they see that the industry, the same industry perhaps, in which it must never be forgotten they are partners with the capitalists, gives opulence to their employers and a mere pittance to them? This is not common envy or covetousness of the wealth of others, it is a sense of injustice that the very same industry in which they co-operate with others, should enrich those others and seem only to impoverish them. The rebellious spirit thus engendered is one of the ugliest features of the present situation. There would be less of that spirit of discontent, if there were less of the capitalist spirit in industry and more of the co-operative, there would then perhaps be fewer millionaires among the employers, but there might also be fewer socialists among the workers.

Besides that just considered, there is another way

in which the capitalist spirit manifests itself to the detriment of any real co-operation between capital and labour, and that is the lack of the personal element in the relations between them and, more particularly, the lack of personal interest of employers in the employed. This defect is one to which the capitalist employer is peculiarly exposed, because it is one which the working of the capitalist system itself tends to produce. That system, as it is commonly worked, affords little opportunity of personal contact between employers and employed. And you cannot expect to find much in the way of personal relations between people who never meet.

In the older days of small business, where employers and employed were more thrown together, personal relations were possible between them, and community of thought and feeling and purpose. In these days of "Big Business" such relations are more difficult because of its magnitude and the complexity of its organisation. To begin with, in the huge, overgrown concerns of the present day it is not always easy to say precisely who the employer is. First, there is a body of shareholders, who subscribe the capital. These shareholders may be constantly changing as the shares change hands. The shareholders choose a Board of Directors. The Directors elect a chairman and appoint a manager. The manager's duties are often too numerous and varied for his personal attention and must, therefore, be divided among a host of minor

officials of various grades, who are often the only people who come into direct contact with the worker. In a complex system like this, who is the actual employer? In former days the East India Company used to be known as "John Company." That was the nearest approach to a personal designation it admitted of. And so now in the big capitalist industries, who is the employer? "John Company." There seems little room for personal relations between a "John Company" and its employees, still less for anything like personal interest and sympathy.

The difficulty is increased when it is borne in mind that all this complex organisation is designed primarily for quite another object, financial profit. The shareholders contribute the capital and draw their dividends. That is their sole interest in the industry, a purely commercial and selfish interest. The Directors have to consider the shareholders' interests, and hence are inclined to subordinate everything to the increasing of dividends and the cutting of all but necessary expenses. The manager is removable at the will of the Board of Directors and is likely to be removed unless the business pays. It is plain which way his interests lie. The employees just do their work and draw their wages. In a scheme like this the only connexion between employers and employed may come to be a cash nexus and nothing more; anything in the shape of personal relations might seem almost out of place. And hence there is a natural tendency for the capitalist

employer to shrug his shoulders and say, "Well, really the welfare of the workers is no affair of mine. The business to too big for considerations of that kind. Besides, they are outside its scope. I am not a philanthropist, I am a business man, and business is business, it is not a friendly society."

There you have the capitalist spirit in its crudest expression. Such capitalists need to be reminded that whether a capitalist business is a friendly society or not, it is at all events a co-operative society. It may be that the capitalist system may seem in its working to exclude the personal element. But, on the other hand, by its very nature as a co-operative system, it makes the personal element imperative. Without the personal touch, you can get perhaps co-operation of a kind, a perfunctory, a sullen co-operation, but not a willing, a friendly co-operation. And friendliness, good-will, are the very soul of all co-operation, if it is to be fully effective. Without that, co-operation hardly deserves to be called co-operation at all.

If, then, the capitalist system by its very nature demands willing co-operation, and by its working seems to exclude it, it is plain there must be something wrong in its working. And one thing at least that is often wrong in its working is the attitude of Directors, their apathy and indifference towards the well-being of the workers. We have said it is difficult sometimes in the capitalist system to determine who the employers

are. We shall not be far wrong if we say that, as a rule, the Directors are the real executive. In them is vested the chief authority. They come nearest then to being the actual employer, and on them devolves the chief responsibility for the proper working of the system. It is for them, then, to infuse something of the personal element into the business they control.

Let Directors, then, concern themselves not only with balance-sheets, with questions of profit and loss, of dividends and wages, but also with the welfare of the workers, with the conditions of their employment, with the provision of healthy premises for work, with the fixing of reasonable hours, which allow of opportunities for necessary rest and refreshment and relaxation. By so doing they would not only be serving their own material interests by keeping men fit for their work, but, what is of more importance, they would be performing their duty as Christian employers.

Again, let directors give a sympathetic ear to the workers' grievances and show a genuine desire to redress them. Let them devise some plan—it surely ought not to pass the wit of man to devise such a plan —which, while maintaining their own supremacy in the general conduct of the business, gives the workers some voice in its councils, some share in its control, at least in questions in which the workers are directly concerned. How can you expect men to take any interest in a business concern in which they have no say ?

Such friendly treatment on the part of employers would beget a corresponding friendly disposition in the employed; men would feel they were being treated not as economic units but as fellow-workers and fellow-men, that would give them some sense of the dignity of their work, some pride in their work, perhaps even some love of their work, some interest in its success, and the result would be to change the capitalist system from what it too often is, a cast-iron system, into a system of flesh and blood, to make it a real co-operation between capital and labour, because a friendly, willing co-operation; and so bring it nearer to realising the ideal of Christian industry.*

But the obstacles to co-operation with labour do not all come from the capitalist. We have said there are faults on both sides. And, if on the side of capital the faults may be ascribed to the capitalist spirit, on the side of labour there is often a spirit, which is also destructive of the co-operative spirit, and that is the spirit of discontent, a spirit inspired by a sense of grievance on the part of labour against capital. This

* Since the above was written some words of the present Prime Minister have been quoted which are much to the point. What we have called the personal element, he calls the human factor in industry. "In a speech delivered when he was President of the Board of Trade. Mr Baldwin asked manufacturers to devote more attention to the human factor in industry. Speaking as a business man, he recalled the fact that at the time when he entered his father's business he knew the Christian names of hundreds of the workers, and he deplored the way in which the employing class had during the last half-century drifted away from those whom they employed. He put the responsibility for re-humanising industry upon the large employers." *Times*, 23rd May 1923.

is equally fatal to co-operation. You cannot co-operate with a man with a grievance.

Unquestionably labour has, as we have seen, some real grievances to show. And a keen sense of these grievances and a determination to secure their redress need be no bar to general co-operation between labour and capital. But what is such a bar is the spirit which nurses grievances, which magnifies those grievances which are real and manufactures some which are not, so as to make it appear that grievances are an inevitable accompaniment of the capitalist system itself. This is the discontented spirit which produces in the worker an intransigent, an irreconcilable attitude towards his employer which is an effective bar to all co-operation.

I do not say for a moment that this spirit is universal in the ranks of labour. But it is far from being uncommon. And it would not be so common as it is were it not for the influence of a few extremists and agitators, who are animated by uncompromising hostility to capital and all it stands for. These men do not represent the best elements in the Labour Party. Moderate men in that party are just as fully alive as they to the shortcomings of the capitalist system, are just as eager to remedy them, and they believe they can be remedied, so as to ensure the smooth working of the system. Here is the testimony to that effect of one such leader, Mr Thomas, the Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen and Labour

Member for Derby. "Our aspirations are not mere selfishness; we understand the economics of the situation enough to make only those demands that are reasonable and just, and I believe the employers are becoming awake to that fact. Let this spirit continue and we shall arrive at peace. And peace in industry means prosperity." * I do not suppose the writer of those words is any admirer of the capitalist system, but at all events he does not despair of it.

Contrast with this temperate statement the following description of the capitalist system from another source: "A system of production for profit for a section of society whose members, in their capacity as capitalist controllers of industry, have no regard whatever for the well-being of the people as a whole; such a system merits no respect from any worker." † And, therefore, this writer and those who agree with him are determined it shall not have any. They habitually hold it up to contempt and obloquy. They are never weary of denouncing it. All the evils which afflict mankind are ascribed by them to capitalism. If war breaks out, it is a capitalist war; if peace is made and some of its provisions are found not to work satisfactorily, it is a capitalist peace; the existing unemployment is put down to capitalism; capitalism is made responsible for every trade depression, for every in-

* *What We Want and Why*, p. 37.

† "The Case for the Engineers," by Mr Tom Mann, in *What We Want and Why*, p. 95.

dustrial crisis ; whatever is amiss in the country is due to the inefficiency of a capitalist government, and so on. Vague denunciations of this kind repeated again and again produce some effect. They create an atmosphere of prejudice and suspicion among the classes less able to judge for themselves, they make a bogey of capitalism and teach the workers to regard it as the sworn enemy of labour, and so foment the spirit of discontent. In the course of these addresses we have been at some pains to point out and condemn some abuses of the capitalist system which impede its satisfactory working, and have shown how they can be remedied. The irreconcilables do not want to see them remedied, they do not want the system to work smoothly, they want to make it unworkable, so as to abolish it altogether. Well, the capitalist system is no Heaven-born system, and their attitude toward it might not seem unreasonable if they had a better system to replace it. But when asked to propose an alternative they have nothing better to suggest than the system tried in Russia, with what results we all know : a system which, after having abolished capitalism, has brought that unhappy country to the verge of ruin, has reduced millions of its workers to starvation, and finally has had to call in capitalism again to save it from utter destruction. That is not a very convincing demonstration of the inefficiency of the capitalist system. In fact, apart from possible abuses, to represent the existence of the capitalist

system as a grievance in itself, is not a real, it is an imaginary grievance.

Take another of these so-called grievances, which are ventilated by the agitators to inflame the spirit of discontent of labour with capital, the wage system. This they represent as a degrading system, a species of servitude, and the wage-earners as slaves at the mercy of capitalist slave-drivers. It is not uncommon to find it thus described: the capitalist employer makes large profits and realises large fortunes by exploiting the workers' labour and then hands them back in the form of wages, a miserable fraction of the amount he has robbed them of. This is, of course, a travesty of the wage system. That a man should freely give his labour and receive compensation in exchange, on conditions agreed upon, provided those conditions are fair and reasonable, what is there degrading or servile in that? When some of my readers, as boys or youths, did their first piece of work and drew their first wages, did they feel degraded by accepting them? On the contrary, did they not experience a positive sense of elation, of honest pride, and independence in having earned something by their own efforts That is the natural feeling of the wage-earner. The other, the feeling of degradation, of servility, is purely fictitious, an artificial feeling, which would never have occurred to the workers as a body had it not been industriously instilled into them by Marx and the advocates of Marx's doctrine of "Surplus value." As

before, we ask what would these men substitute for the much-maligned wage system. Equal distribution among all, they will tell you, of wealth and profits, the Communist solution, an immoral and impracticable one, as we have shown on a former occasion. Till they can produce a better alternative than this, again we have the right to consider their complaints of the wage system as another imaginary grievance, manufactured to make the worker discontented with his lot.

And this is precisely their ulterior object. To excite in the workers a spirit of discontent not only with the capitalist system, not only with the wage system, but with any system which leaves them in a subordinate position, a spirit of discontent with their lot. One of their spokesmen puts his objections to the wage system thus—however just, however generous the wages— "the wage system puts the employer and employed in the relation of master and servant." * There you have the real crux of the situation. But relations of master and servant there must be in any organised society. They are not due to capitalist systems or wage systems, they are inseparable from any system that can be devised. I am well aware of the derision with which such a statement from the Christian pulpit is apt to be met. The Churches, it is said, have always kept the workers down. The Churches are in the capitalist conspiracy. It has always been their policy to delude, to dope the toiling

* *Industrial Ideals*, Gollancz, p. 18.

masses by preaching patience and resignation to their hard lot in the present with shadowy prospects of rewards to come. And yet it is true that while human nature remains as it is there must be inequalities in human life, and among them the inequality between master and servant. Who are the truest friends of the worker, those who hold out to them prospects of a millennium which can never come, who delude them with promises which can never be redeemed, or those who urge them to look facts in the face, to see things as they are and must be, so that while they strive to better their position, they strive at the same time to do so in no discontented spirit? And yet not in any fatalistic spirit, not in a spirit of blind acquiescence in the decrees of some relentless destiny, but in the Christian spirit of faith and hope, looking to Him whose life is the perfect life, the pattern life, and yet Who "was poor and in labour from His youth," Who came to show us how to live, and yet Who came not as a master, but as a servant, "not to be served but to serve," and did so to teach us all that the real prizes of life are not material wealth and prosperity, but the moral virtues, not the least of which is Christian patience and contentment, and that these are sure of their reward in the life to come.

"The servant is no better than his master." The Master came not to be served but to serve. That was Christ's lot. The thought of that makes the Christian worker content with his.

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POSTSCRIPT.

It has been my object in these Addresses to re-assert the claim of Christianity to a share in the Reconstruction of which we hear so much. I have confined myself to the sphere in which reconstruction is most needed, the sphere of labour, and in that I have dealt only with the ethical questions involved. Having in the first six Addresses sketched out the lines which reconstruction in the labour world should follow, if conducted on Christian principles, I have, in the remaining Addresses, examined such alternative schemes as those of Trade Unionism, and of the forms of Socialism, known as Syndicalism and Communism, some of the schemes merely non-Christian, others frankly anti-Christian, concluding with the consideration of the relation of Christianity to Capitalism. Although my method of treatment has necessitated the exposure of the immoral character of many of the Socialistic schemes for the betterment of the workers' lot—how far such schemes may be crude and unworkable as well, it is for others to judge—I have tried nevertheless to hold the balance evenly between the two parties in the industrial world, Capital and Labour, to admit that the faults are not all

on one side and to be fair to both. The failure of the experiments tried hitherto to effect a solution of Labour Problems may induce men to turn at last to Christianity for a remedy. And indeed St Peter's words are as true to-day as when they were first uttered —"Non est in alio aliquo salus." There is no hope for the world's reconstruction, any more than there is hope for its salvation, save in Christ, its Redeemer, and in the practical application of Christian principles to the world's needs.

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